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JOY IN THE MORNING

BY MARY R. S. ANDREWS

JOY IN THE MORNING

THE ETERNAL FEMININE

AUGUST FIRST

THE ETERNAL MASCULINE

THE MILITANTS

BOB AND THE GUIDES

CROSSES OF WAR

HER COUNTRY

OLD GLORY

THE COUNSEL ASSIGNED

THE COURAGE OF THE COMMONPLACE

THE LIFTED BANDAGE

THE PERFECT TRIBUTE

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He pinned the thing men die for on the shabby coat of the guide.

[*Page* 135]

JOY IN THE MORNING

BY

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1919

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[Page 135]

JOY IN THE MORNING

BY

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

NEW YORK
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1919

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Published, September, 1919

DEDICATION

To the two stars of a service flag, to a brother and a son who served in France, this book is dedicated. No book, to my thinking, were one Shakespere and Isaiah rolled together, might fittingly answer the honor which they, with four million more American soldiers, have brought to their own. So that the stories march out very proudly, headed by the names of

CHAPLAIN HERBERT SHIPMAN

AND

CAPTAIN PAUL SHIPMAN ANDREWS

NOTE

Now that the tide of Khaki has set toward our shores instead of away; now that the streets are filled with splendid boys with gold chevrons of foreign service or no less honorable silver chevrons of service here; now that the dear lads who sleep in France know that the "torch was caught" from their hands, and that faith with them was kept; now that—thank God, who, after all, rules—the war is over, there is an old word close to the thought of the nation. "Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." A whole country is so thinking. For possibly ten centuries the Great War will be a background for fiction. To us, who have lived those years, any tale of them is a personal affair. Every-day women and men whom one meets in the street may well say to us: "My boy was in the Argonne," or: "My brother fought at St. Mihiel." Over and

over, unphrased, our minds echo lines of that verse found in the pocket of the soldier dead at Gallipoli:

"*We* saw the powers of darkness put to flight,
We saw the morning break."

Crushed and glorified beyond all generations of the planet, war stories prick this generation like family records. It is from us of to-day that the load is lifted. We have weathered the heaviness of the night; to us "Joy cometh in the morning."

M. R. S. A.

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THE DITCH

PERSONS

THE BOY ..... *an American soldier*

THE BOY'S DREAM OF HIS MOTHER

ANGÉLIQUE ..... } *French children*
JEAN-BAPTISTE ..... }

THE TEACHER

THE ONE SCHOOLGIRL WITH IMAGINATION

THE THREE SCHOOLGIRLS WITHOUT IMAGINATION

HE

SHE

THE AMERICAN GENERAL

THE ENGLISH STATESMAN

The Time.—A summer day in 1918 and a summer day in 2018

FIRST ACT

The time is a summer day in 1918. *The scene is the first-line trench of the Germans—held lately by the Prussian Imperial Guard—half an hour after it has been taken by a charge of men from the Blank*th *Regiment, United States Army. There has been a mistake and the charge was not preceded by artillery preparation as usual. However, the Americans have taken the trench by the unexpectedness of their attack, and the Prussian Guard has been routed in confusion. But the German artillery has at once opened fire on the Americans, and also a German machine gun has enfiladed the trench. Ninety-nine Americans have been killed in the trench. One is alive, but dying. He speaks, being part of the time delirious.*

The Boy. Why can't I stand? What—is it? I'm wounded. The sand-bags roll when I try—to hold to them. I'm—badly wounded. (*Sinks down. Silence.*) How still it is! We—we took the trench. Glory be! We took it! (*Shouts weakly as he lies in the trench.*) (*Sits up and stares, shading his eyes.*) It's horrid still. Why—they're here! Jack—you! What makes you

—lie there? You beggar—oh, my God! They're dead. Jack Arnold, and Martin and—Cram and Bennett and Emmet and—Dragamore— Oh—God, God! All the boys! Good American boys. The whole blamed bunch—dead in a ditch. Only me. Dying, in a ditch filled with dead men. What's the sense? (*Silence.*) This damned silly war. This devilish—killing. When we ought to be home, doing man's work—and play. Getting some tennis, maybe, this hot afternoon; coming in sweaty and dirty—and happy—to a tub—and dinner—with mother. (*Groans.*) It begins to hurt—oh, it hurts confoundedly. (*Becomes delirious.*) Canoeing on the river. With little Jim. See that trout jump, Jimmie? Cast now. Under the log at the edge of the trees. That's it! Good—oh! (*Groans.*) It hurts—badly. Why, how can I stand it? How can anybody? I'm badly wounded. Jimmie—tell mother. Oh—good boy—you've hooked him. Now play him; lead him away from the lily-pads. (*Groans.*) Oh, mother! Won't you come? I'm wounded. You never failed me before. I need you—if I die. You

went away down—to the gate of life, to bring me inside. Now—it's the gate of death—you won't fail? You'll bring me through to that other life? You and I, mother—and I won't be scared. You're the first—and the last. (*Puts out his arm searching and finds a hand, still warm, of a dead soldier.*) Ah—mother, my dear. I knew —you'd come. Your hand is warm—comforting. You always—are there when I need you. All my life. Things are getting—hazy. (*He laughs.*) When I was a kid and came down in an elevator—I was all right, I didn't mind the drop if I might hang on to your hand. Remember? (*Pats dead soldier's hand, then clutches it again tightly.*) You come with me when I go across and let me—hang on—to your hand. And I won't be scared. (*Silence.*) This damned—damned—silly war! All the good American boys. We charged the Fritzes. How they ran! But—there was a mistake. No artillery preparation. There ought to be crosses and medals going for that charge, for the boys— (*Laughs.*) Why, they're all dead. And me—I'm dying, in a ditch.

Twenty years old. Done out of sixty years by—by the silly war. What's it for? Mother, what's it about? I'm ill a bit. I can't think what good it is. Slaughtering boys—all the nations' boys—honest, hard-working boys mostly. Junk. Fine chaps an hour ago. What's the good? I'm dying—for the flag. But—what's the good? It'll go on—wars. Again. Peace sometimes, but nothing gained. And all of us—dead. Cheated out of our lives. Wouldn't the world have done as well if this long ditch of good fellows had been let live? Mother?

The Boy's Dream of His Mother. (*Seems to speak.*) My very dearest—no. It takes this great burnt-offering to free the world. The world will be free. This is the crisis of humanity; you are bending the lever that lifts the race. Be glad, dearest life of the world, to be part of that glory. Think back to your school-days, to a sentence you learned. Lincoln spoke it. "These dead shall not have died in vain, and government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

The Boy. (*Whispers.*) I remember. It's good. "Shall not have died in vain"—"The people—shall not perish"—where's your hand, mother? It's taps for me. The lights are going out. Come with me—mother. (*Dies.*)

SECOND ACT

The scene is the same trench one hundred years later, in the year 2018. *It is ten o'clock of a summer morning. Two French children have come to the trench to pick flowers. The little girl of seven is gentle and soft-hearted; her older brother is a man of nearly ten years, and feels his patriotism and his responsibilities.*

Angélique. (*The little French girl.*) Here's where they grow, Jean-B'tiste.

Jean-Baptiste. (*The little French boy.*) I know. They bloom bigger blooms in the American ditch.

Angélique. (*Climbs into the ditch and picks flowers busily.*) Why do people call it the 'Merican ditch, Jean-B'tiste? What's 'Merican?

Jean-Baptiste. (*Ripples laughter.*) One's little sister doesn't know much! Never mind. One is so young—three years younger than I am. I'm ten, you know.

Angélique. Tiens, Jean-B'tiste. Not ten till next month.

Jean-Baptiste. Oh, but—but—next month!

Angélique. What's 'Merican?

Jean-Baptiste. Droll *p'tite.* Why, everybody in all France knows that name. Of American.

Angélique. (*Unashamed.*) Do they? What is it?

Jean-Baptiste. It's the people that live in the so large country across the ocean. They came over and saved all our lives, and France.

Angélique. (*Surprised.*) Did they save my life, Jean-B'tiste?

Jean-Baptiste. Little *drôle.* You weren't born.

Angélique. Oh! Whose life did they then save? Maman's?

Jean-Baptiste. But no. She was not born either.

Angélique. Whose life, then — the grandfather's?

Jean-Baptiste. But—even he was not born. (*Disconcerted by Angélique's direct tactics.*) One sees they could not save the lives of people who were not here. But—they were brave—but

yes—and friends to France. And they came across the ocean to fight for France. Big, strong young soldiers in brown uniforms—the grandfather told me about it yesterday. I know it all. His father told him, and he was here. In this field. (*Jean-Baptiste looks about the meadow, where the wind blows flowers and wheat.*) There was a large battle—a fight very immense. It was not like this then. It was digged over with ditches and the soldiers stood in the ditches and shot at the wicked Germans in the other ditches. Lots and lots of soldiers died.

Angélique. (*Lips trembling.*) Died — in ditches?

Jean-Baptiste. (*Grimly.*) Yes, it is true.

Angélique. (*Breaks into sobs.*) I can't bear you to tell me that. I can't bear the soldiers to—die—in ditches.

Jean-Baptiste. (*Pats her shoulder.*) I'm sorry I told you if it makes you cry. You are so little. But it was one hundred years ago. They're dead now.

Angélique. (*Rubs her eyes with her dress and*

smiles.) Yes, they're quite dead now. So—tell me some more.

Jean-Baptiste. But I don't want to make you cry more, *p'tite.* You're so little.

Angélique. I'm not *very* little. I'm bigger than Anne-Marie Dupont, and she's eight.

Jean-Baptiste. But no. She's not eight till next month. She told me.

Angélique. Oh, well—next month. Me, I want to hear about the brave 'Mericans. Did they make this ditch to stand in and shoot the wicked Germans?

Jean-Baptiste. They didn't make it, but they fought the wicked Germans in a brave, wonderful charge, the bravest sort, the grandfather said. And they took the ditch away from the wicked Germans, and then—maybe you'll cry.

Angélique. I won't. I promise you I won't.

Jean-Baptiste. Then, when the ditch—only they called it a trench—was well full of American soldiers, the wicked Germans got a machine gun at the end of it and fired all the way along—the

grandfather called it enfiladed—and killed every American in the whole long ditch.

Angélique. (*Bursts into tears again; buries her face in her skirt.*) I—I'm sorry I cry, but the 'Mericans were so brave and fought—for France—and it was cruel of the wicked Germans to—to shoot them.

Jean-Baptiste. The wicked Germans were always cruel. But the grandfather says it's quite right now, and as it should be, for they are now a small and weak nation, and scorned and watched by other nations, so that they shall never be strong again. For the grandfather says they are not such as can be trusted—no, never the wicked Germans. The world will not believe their word again. They speak not the truth. Once they nearly smashed the world, when they had power. So it is looked to by all nations that never again shall Germany be powerful. For they are sly, and cruel as wolves, and only intelligent to be wicked. That is what the grandfather says.

Angélique. Me, I'm sorry for the poor wicked

Germans that they are so bad. It is not nice to be bad. One is punished.

Jean-Baptiste. (*Sternly.*) It is the truth. One is always punished. As long as the world lasts it will be a punishment to be a German. But as long as France lasts there will be a nation to love the name of America, one sees. For the Americans were generous and brave. They left their dear land and came and died for us, to keep us free in France from the wicked Germans.

Angélique. (*Lip trembles.*) I'm sorry—they died.

Jean-Baptiste. But, *p'tite!* That was one hundred years ago. It is necessary that they would have been dead by now in every case. It was more glorious to die fighting for freedom and France than just to die—fifty years later. Me, I'd enjoy very much to die fighting. But look! You pulled up the roots. And what is that thing hanging to the roots—not a rock?

Angélique. No, I think not a rock. (She takes the object in her hands and knocks dirt from it.) But what is it, Jean-B'tiste?

Jean-Baptiste. It's—but never mind. I can't always know everything, don't you see, Angélique? It's just something of one of the Americans who died in the ditch. One is always finding something in these old battle-fields.

Angélique. (*Rubs the object with her dress. Takes a handful of sand and rubs it on the object. Spits on it and rubs the sand. V'là,* Jean-B'tiste —it shines.

Jean-Baptiste. (*Loftily.*) Yes. It is nothing, that. One finds such things.

Angélique. (*Rubbing more.*) And there are letters on it.

Jean-Baptiste. Yes. It is nothing, that. One has flowers *en masse* now, and it is time to go home. Come then, *p'tite,* drop the dirty bit of brass and pick up your pretty flowers. *Tiens!* Give me your hand. I'll pull you up the side of the ditch. (*Jean-Baptiste turns as they start.*) I forgot the thing which the grandfather told me I must do always. (*He stands at attention.*) *Au revoir,* brave Americans. One salutes your immortal glory. (*Exit Jean-Baptiste and Angélique.*)

THIRD ACT

The scene is the same trench in the year 2018. *It is eleven o'clock of the same summer morning. Four American schoolgirls, of from fifteen to seventeen years, have been brought to see the trench, a relic of the Great War, in charge of their teacher. The teacher, a worn and elderly person, has imagination, and is stirred, as far as her tired nerves may be, by the heroic story of the old ditch. One of the schoolgirls also has imagination and is also stirred. The other three are "young barbarians at play." Two out of five is possibly a large proportion to be blessed with imagination, but the American race has improved in a hundred years.*

Teacher. This, girls, is an important bit of our sight-seeing. It is the last of the old trenches of the Great War to remain intact in all northern France. It was left untouched out of the reverence of the people of the country for one hundred Americans of the Blank*th* Regiment, who died here —in this old ditch. The regiment had charged too soon, by a mistaken order, across what was called

No-Man's Land, from their own front trench, about (*consults guide-book*)—about thirty-five yards away—that would be near where you see the red poppies so thick in the wheat. They took the trench from the Germans, and were then wiped out partly by artillery fire, partly by a German machine gun which was placed, disguised, at the end of the trench and enfiladed the entire length. Three-quarters of the regiment, over two thousand men, were killed in this battle. Since then the regiment has been known as the "Charging Blank*th*."

First Schoolgirl. Wouldn't those poppies be lovely on a yellow hat?

Second Schoolgirl. Ssh! The Eye is on you. How awful, Miss Hadley! And were they all killed? Quite a tragedy!

Third Schoolgirl. Not a yellow hat! Stupid! A corn-colored one—just the shade of the grain with the sun on it. Wouldn't it be lovely! When we get back to Paris——

Fourth Schoolgirl (*the one with imagination*). You idiots! You poor kittens!

First Schoolgirl. If we ever do get back to Paris!

Teacher. (*Wearily.*) Please pay attention. This is one of the world's most sacred spots. It is the scene of a great heroism. It is the place where many of our fellow countrymen laid down their lives. How can you stand on this solemn ground and chatter about hats?

Third Schoolgirl. Well, you see, Miss Hadley, we're fed up with solemn grounds. You can't expect us to go into raptures at this stage over an old ditch. And, to be serious, wouldn't some of those field flowers make a lovely combination for hats? With the French touch, don't you know? You'd be darling in one—so *ingénue!*

Second Schoolgirl. Ssh! She'll kill you. (*Three girls turn their backs and stifle a giggle.*)

Teacher. Girls, you may be past your youth yourselves one day.

First Schoolgirl. (*Airily.*) But we're well preserved so far, Miss Hadley.

Fourth Schoolgirl. (*Has wandered away a few yards. She bends and picks a flower from the*

ditch. She speaks to herself.) The flag floated here. There were shells bursting and guns thundering and groans and blood—here. American boys were dying where I stand safe. That's what they did. They made me safe. They kept America free. They made the "world safe for freedom." (*She bends and speaks into the ditch.*) Boy, you who lay just there in suffering and gave your good life away that long-ago summer day—thank you. You died for us. America remembers. Because of you there will be no more wars, and girls such as we are may wander across battlefields, and nations are happy and well governed, and kings and masters are gone. You did that, you boys. You lost fifty years of life, but you gained our love forever. Your deaths were not in vain. Good-by, dear, dead boys.

Teacher. (*Calls.*) Child, come! We must catch the train.

FOURTH ACT

The scene is the same trench in the year 2018. *It is three o'clock of the afternoon of the same summer day. A newly married couple have come to see the trench. He is journeying as to a shrine; she has allowed impersonal interests, such as history, to lapse under the influence of love and a trousseau. She is, however, amenable to patriotism, and, her husband applying the match, she takes fire—she also, from the story of the trench.*

He. This must be the place.

She. It is nothing but a ditch filled with flowers.

He. The old trench. (*Takes off his hat.*)

She. Was it—it was—in the Great War?

He. My dear!

She. You're horrified. But I really—don't know.

He. Don't know? You must.

She. You've gone and married a person who hasn't a glimmer of history. What will you do about it?

He. I'll be brave and stick to my bargain. Do you mean that you've forgotten the charge of the Blank*th* Americans against the Prussian Guard? The charge that practically ended the war?

She. Ended the war? How could one charge end the war?

He. There was fighting after. But the last critical battle was here (*looks about*) in these meadows, and for miles along. And it was just here that the Blank*th* United States Regiment made its historic dash. In that ditch—filled with flowers—a hundred of our lads were mown down in three minutes. About two thousand more followed them to death.

She. Oh—I do know. It was *that* charge. I learned about it in school; it thrilled me always.

He. Certainly. Every American child knows the story. I memorized the list of the one hundred soldiers' names of my own free will when I was ten. I can say them now. "Arnold—Ashe—Bennett—Emmet—Dragmore——"

She. Don't say the rest, Ted—tell me about it as it happened. (*She slips her hand into his.*)

We two, standing here young and happy, looking forward to a lifetime together, will do honor, that way, to those soldiers who gave up their happy youth and their lives for America.

He. (*Puts his arm around her.*) We will. We'll make a little memorial service and I'll preach a sermon about how gloriously they fell and how, unknowingly, they won the war—and so much more!

She. Tell me.

He. It was a hundred years ago about now—summer. A critical battle raged along a stretch of many miles. About the centre of the line—here—the Prussian Imperial Guards, the crack soldiers of the German army, held the first trench —this ditch. American forces faced them, but in weeks of fighting had not been able to make much impression. Then, on a day, the order came down the lines that the Blank*th* United States Regiment, opposed to the Guard, was to charge and take the German front trench. Of course the artillery was to prepare for their charge as usual, but there was some mistake. There was no curtain

of fire before them, no artillery preparation to help them. And the order to charge came. So, right into the German guns, in the face of those terrible Prussian Guards, our lads went "over the top" with a great shout, and poured like a flame, like a catapult, across the space between them—No-Man's Land, they called it then—it was only thirty-five yards—to the German trench. So fast they rushed, and so unexpected was their coming, with no curtain of artillery to shield them, that the Germans were for a moment taken aback. Not a shot was fired for a space of time almost long enough to let the Americans reach the trench, and then the rifles broke out and the brown uniforms fell like leaves in autumn. But not all. They rushed on pell-mell, cutting wire, pouring irresistibly into the German trench. And the Guards, such as were not mown down, lost courage at the astounding impetus of the dash, and scrambled and ran from their trench. They took it—our boys took that trench—this old ditch. But then the big German guns opened a fire like hail and a machine gun at the end—down there it must have

been—enfiladed the trench, and every man in it was killed. But the charge ended the war. Other Americans, mad with the glory of it, poured in a sea after their comrades and held the trench, and poured on and on, and wiped out that day the Prussian Guard. The German morale was broken from then; within four months the war was over.

She. (*Turns and hides her face on his shoulder and shakes with sobs.*) I'm not—crying for sorrow—for them. I'm crying—for the glory of it. Because—I'm so proud and glad—that it's too much for me. To belong to such a nation—to such men. I'm crying for knowing it was my nation—my men. And America is—the same today. I know it. If she needed you today, Ted, you would fight like that. You would go over the top with the charging Blank*th*, with a shout, if the order came—wouldn't you, my own man?

He. (*Looking into the old ditch with his head bent reverently.*) I hope so.

She. And I hope I would send you with all my heart. Death like that is more than life.

He. I've made you cry.

She. Not you. What they did—those boys.

He. It's fitting that Americans should come here, as they do come, as to a Mecca, a holy place. For it was here that America was saved. That's what they did, the boys who made that charge. They saved America from the most savage and barbarous enemy of all time. As sure as France and England were at the end of their rope—and they were—so surely Germany, the victor, would have invaded America, and Belgium would have happened in our country. A hundred years wouldn't have been enough to free us again, if that had happened. You and I, dearest, owe it to those soldiers that we are here together, free, prosperous citizens of an ever greater country.

She. (*Drops on her knees by the ditch.*) It's a shrine. Men of my land, I own my debt. I thank you for all I have and am. God bless you in your heaven. (*Silence.*)

He. (*Tears in his eyes. His arm around her neck as he bends to her.*) You'll not forget the story of the Charging Blank*th?*

She. Never again. In my life. (*Rising.*) I

think their spirits must be here often. Perhaps they're happy when Americans are here. It's a holy place, as you said. Come away now. I love to leave it in sunshine and flowers with the dear ghosts of the boys. (*Exit He and She.*)

FIFTH ACT

The scene is the same trench in the year 2018. *It is five o'clock of the same summer afternoon. An officer of the American Army and an English cabinet member come, together, to visit the old trench. The American has a particular reason for his interest; the Englishman accompanies the distinguished American. The two review the story of the trench and speak of other things connected, and it is hoped that they set forth the far-reaching work of the soldiers who died, not realizing their work, in the great fight of the Charging Blank*th.

Englishman. It's a peaceful scene.

American. (*Advances to the side of the ditch. Looks down. Takes off his cap.*) I came across the ocean to see it. (*He looks over the fields.*) It's quiet.

Englishman. The trenches were filled in all over the invaded territory within twenty-five years after the war. Except a very few kept as a manner of monument. Object-lessons, don't you know, in what the thing meant. Even those

are getting obliterated. They say this is quite the best specimen in all France.

American. It doesn't look warlike. What a lot of flowers!

Englishman. Yes. The folk about here have a tradition, don't you know, that poppies mark the places where blood flowed most.

American. Ah! (*Gazes into the ditch.*) Poppies there. A hundred of our soldiers died at once down there. Mere lads mostly. Their names and ages are on a tablet in the capitol at Washington, and underneath is a sentence from Lincoln's Gettysburg speech: "These dead shall not have died in vain, and government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Englishman. Those are undying words.

American. And undying names — the lads' names.

Englishman. What they and the other Americans did can never die. Not while the planet endures. No nation at that time realized how vital was your country's entrance into the war. Three

months later it would have been too late. Your young, untried forces lifted worn-out France and England and swept us to victory. It was America's victory at the last. It is our glory to confess that, for from then on America has been our kin.

American. (*Smiles.*) England is our well-beloved elder sister for all time now.

Englishman. The soldiers who died there (*gestures to the ditch*) and their like did that also. They tied the nations together with a bond of common gratitude, common suffering, common glory.

American. You say well that there was common gratitude. England and France had fought our battle for three years at the time we entered the war. We had nestled behind the English fleet. Those grim gray ships of yours stood between us and the barbarians very literally.

Englishman. Without doubt Germany would have been happy to invade the only country on earth rich enough to pay her war debt. And you were astonishingly open to invasion. It is one of the historical facts that a student of history of

this twenty-first century finds difficult to realize.

American. The Great War made revolutionary changes. That condition of unpreparedness was one. That there will never be another war is the belief of all governments. But if all governments should be mistaken, not again would my country, or yours, be caught unprepared. A general staff built of soldiers and free of civilians hampering is one advantage we have drawn from our ordeal of 1917.

Englishman. Your army is magnificently efficient.

American. And yours. Heaven grant neither may ever be needed! Our military efficiency is the pride of an unmilitary nation. One Congress, since the Great War and its lessons, has vied with another to keep our high place.

Englishman. Ah! Your Congress. That has changed since the old days—since La Follette.

American. The name is a shame and a warning to us. Our children are taught to remember it so. The "little group of wilful men," the eleven who came near to shipwrecking the country, were

equally bad, perhaps, but they are forgotten. La Follette stands for them and bears the curses of his countrymen, which they all earned.

Englishman. Their ignominy served America; it roused the country to clean its Augean stables.

American. The war purified with fire the legislative soul.

Englishman. Exactly. Men are human still, certainly, yet genuine patriotism appears to be a *sine qua non* now, where bombast answered in the old day. Corruption is no longer accepted. Public men then were surprisingly simple, surprisingly cheap and limited in their methods. There were two rules for public and private life. It was thought quixotic, I gather from studying the documents of the time, to expect anything different. And how easily the change came!

American. The nation rose and demanded honesty, and honesty was there. The enormous majority of decent people woke from a discontented apathy and took charge. Men sprang into place naturally and served the nation. The old log-rolling, brainless, greedy public officials were

thrown into the junk-heap. As if by magic the stress of the war wrung out the rinsings and the scourings and left the fabric clean.

Englishman. The stress of the war affected more than internal politics. You and I, General, are used to a standard of conduct between responsible nations as high as that taken for granted between responsible persons. But, if one considers, that was far from the case a hundred years ago. It was in 1914, that von Bethmann-Hollweg spoke of "a scrap of paper."

American. Ah—Germans!

Englishman. Certainly one does not expect honor or sincerity from German psychology. Even the little Teutonic Republic of to-day is tricky, scheming always to get a foothold for power, a beginning for the army they will never again be allowed to have. Even after the Kaiser and the Crown Prince and the other rascals were punished they tried to cheat us, if you remember. Yet it is not that which I had in mind. The point I was making was that today it would be out of drawing for a government even of charla-

tans, like the Prussians, to advance the sort of claims which they did. In commonplace words, it was expected then that governments, as against each other, would be self-seeking. To-day decency demands that they should be, as men must be, unselfish.

America. (*Musingly.*) It's odd how long it took the world—governments—human beings—to find the truth of the very old phrase that "he who findeth his life must lose it."

Englishman. The simple fact of that phrase before the Great War was not commonly grasped. People thought it purely religious and reserved for saints and church services. As a working hypothesis it was not generally known. The every-day ideals of our generation, the friendships and brotherhoods of nations as we know them would have been thought Utopian.

American. Utopian? Perhaps our civilization is better than Utopian. The race has grown with a bound since we all went through hell together. How far the civilization of 1914 stood above that of 1614! The difference between galley-slaves and

able-bodied seamen of your and our navy! Greater yet than the change in that three hundred years is the change in the last one hundred. I look at it with a soldier's somewhat direct view. Humanity went helpless and alone into a fiery furnace and came through holding on to God's hand. We have clung closely to that powerful grasp since.

Englishman. Certainly the race has emerged from an epoch of intellect to an epoch of spirituality—which comprehends and extends intellect. There have never been inventions such as those of our era. And the inventors have been, as it were, men inspired. Something beyond themselves has worked through them for the world. A force like that was known only sporadically before our time.

American. (*Looks into old ditch.*) It would be strange to the lads who charged through horror across this flowery field to hear our talk and to know that to them and their deeds we owe the happiness and the greatness of the world we now live in.

Englishman. Their short, Homeric episode of

life admitted few generalizations, I fancy. To be ready and strong and brave—there was scant time for more than that in those strenuous days. Yet under that simple formula lay a sea of patriotism and self-sacrifice, from which sprang their soldiers' force. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." It was their love—love of country, of humanity, of freedom—which silenced in the end the great engine of evil—Prussianism. The motive power of life is proved, through those dead soldiers, to be not hate, as the Prussians taught, but love.

American. Do you see something shining among the flowers at the bottom of the ditch?

Englishman. Why, yes. Is it—a leaf which catches the light?

American. (*Stepping down.*) I'll see. (*He picks up a metal identification disk worn by a soldier. Angélique has rubbed it so that the letters may mostly be read.*) This is rather wonderful. (*He reads aloud.*) "R. V. H. Randolph —Blank*th* Regiment—U.S." I can't make out the rest.

Englishman. (*Takes the disk.*) Extraordinary! The name and regiment are plain. The identification disk, evidently, of a soldier who died in the trench here. Your own man, General.

American. (*Much stirred.*) And — my own regiment. Two years ago I was the colonel of "The Charging Blank*th*."

HER COUNTRY TOO

HER COUNTRY TOO

DAVID LANCE sat wondering. He was not due at the office till ten this Saturday night and he was putting in a long and thorough wonder. About the service in all its branches; about finance; about the new Liberty Loan. First, how was he to stop being a peaceful reporter on the *Daybreak* and get into uniform; that wonder covered a class including the army, navy and air-service, for he had been refused by all three; he wondered how a small limp from apple-tree acrobatics at ten might be so explained away that he might pass; reluctantly he wondered also about the Y. M. C. A. But he was a fighting man *par excellence.* For him it would feel like slacking to go into any but fighting service. Six feet two and weighing a hundred and ninety, every ounce possible to be muscle was muscle; easy, joyful twenty-four-year-old muscle which knew nothing of fatigue. He was certain he would make a fit

soldier for Uncle Sam, and how, how he wanted to be Uncle Sam's soldier!

He was getting desperate. Every man he knew in the twenties and many a one under and over, was in uniform; bitterly he envied the proud peace in their eyes when he met them. He could not bear to explain things once more as he had explained today to Tom Arnold and "Beef" Johnson, and "Seraph" Olcott, home on leave before sailing for France. He had suffered while they listened courteously and hurried to say that they understood, that it was a shame, and that: "You'll make it yet, old son." And they had then turned to each other comparing notes of camps. It made little impression that he had toiled and sweated early and late in this struggle to get in somewhere —army, navy, air-service—anything to follow the flag. He wasn't allowed. He was still a reporter on the *Daybreak* while the biggest doings of humanity were getting done, and every young son of America had his chance to help. With a strong, tireless body aching for soldier's work, America, his mother, refused him work. He wasn't allowed.

Lance groaned, sitting in his one big chair in his one small room. There were other problems. A Liberty Loan drive was on, and where could he lay hands on money for bonds? He had plunged on the last loan and there was yet something to pay on the $200 subscription. And there was no one and nothing to fall back on except his salary as reporter for the *Daybreak*. His father had died when he was six, and his mother eight years ago; his small capital had gone for his four years at Yale. There was no one—except a legend of cousins in the South. Never was any one poorer or more alone. Yet he must take a bond or two. How might he hold up his head not to fight and not to buy bonds. A knock at the door.

"Come in," growled Lance.

The door opened, and a picture out of a story-book stood framed and smiling. One seldom sees today in the North the genuine old-fashioned negro-woman. A sample was here in Lance's doorway. A bandanna of red and yellow made a turban for her head; a clean brownish calico dress stood crisply about a solid and waistless figure,

and a fresh white apron covered it voluminously in front; a folded white handkerchief lay, fichu-wise, around the creases of a fat black neck; a basket covered with a cloth was on her arm. She stood and smiled as if to give the treat time to have its effect on Lance. "Look who's here!" was in large print all over her. And she radiated peace and good-will.

Lance was on his feet with a shout. "Bless your fat heart, Aunt Basha—I'm glad to see you," he flung at her, and seized the basket and slung it half across the room to a sofa with a casualness alarming to Aunt Basha—christened Bathsheba seventy-five years ago, but "rightly known," she had so instructed Lance, as "Aunt Basha."

"Young marse, don' you ruinate the washin', please sir," she adjured in liquid tones.

"Never you mind. It's the last one you'll do for me," retorted Lance. "Did I tell you you couldn't have the honor of washing for me anymore, Aunt Basha?"

Aunt Basha was wreathed in smiles.

"Yassir, young marse. You tole me dat mo'n tree times befo', a'ready, sir."

"Well—it's final this time. Can't stand your prices. I *can't* stand your exorbitant prices. Now what do you have the heart to charge for dusting off those three old shirts and two and a half collars? Hey?"

Aunt Basha, entirely serene, was enjoying the game. "What does I charges, sir? Fo' dat wash, which you slung 'round acrost de room, sir? Well, sir, young marse, I charges fo' dollars 'n sev'nty fo' cents, sir, dis week. Fo' dat wash."

Lance let loose a howl and flung himself into his chair as if prostrated, long legs out and arms hanging to the floor. Aunt Basha shook with laughter. This was a splendid joke and she never, never tired of it. "You see!" he threw out, between gasps. "Look at that! *Fo'* dollars 'n sev'nty *fo'* cents." He sat up suddenly and pointed a big finger. "Aunt Basha," he whispered, "somebody's been kidding you. Somebody's lied. This palatial apartment, much as it looks like it, is not the home of John D. Rockefeller." He sprung up, drew

an imaginary mantle about him, grasped one elbow with the other hand, dropped his head into the free palm and was Cassius or Hamlet or Faust—all one to Aunt Basha. His left eyebrow screwed up and his right down, and he glowered. "List to her," he began, and shot out a hand, immediately to replace it where it was most needed, under his elbow. "But list, ye Heavens and protect the lamb from this ravening wolf. She chargeth—oh high Heavens above!—she expecteth me to pay" —he gulped sobs—"the extortioner, the she-wolf —expecteth me to pay her—*fo'* dollars 'n sev'nty *fo'* cents!"

Aunt Basha, entranced with this drama, quaked silently like a large coffee jelly, and with that there happened a high, rich, protracted sound which was laughter, but laughter not to be imitated of any vocal chords of a white race. The delicious note soared higher, higher it seemed than the scale of humanity, and was riotous velvet and cream, with no effort or uncertainty. Lance dropped his Mephistopheles pose and grinned.

"It's Q sharp!" he commented. "However does she do it!"

"Naw, sir, young marse," Aunt Basha began, descending to speech. "De she-wolf, she don' expecteth you to pay no fo' dollars 'n sev'nty fo' cents, sir. Dat's thes what I *charges*. Dat ain' what you *pay*. You thes pay me sev'nty fo' cents sir. Dat's all."

"Oh!" Lance let it out like a ten-year-old. It was hard to say which enjoyed this weekly interview more, the boy or the old woman. The boy was lonely and the humanity unashamed of her race and personality made an atmosphere which delighted him. "Oh!" gasped Lance. "That's a relief. I thought it was goodbye to my Sunday trousers."

Aunt Basha, comfortable and efficient, was unpacking the basket and putting away the wash in the few bureau drawers which easily held the boy's belongings. "Dey's all mended nice," she announced. "Young marse, sir, you better wa' out dese yer ole' undercloses right now, endurin' de warm weather, 'caze dey ain' gwine do you fo'

de ccl'. You 'bleeged to buy some new ones sir, when it comes off right cool."

Lance smiled, for there was no one but this old black woman to take care of him and advise his haphazard housekeeping, and he liked it. "Can't buy new ones," he made answer. "There you go again, mixing me up with Rockefeller. I'm not even the Duke of Westminster, do you see. I haven't got any money. Only sev'nty fo' cents for the she-wolf."

Aunt Basha chuckled. Long ago there had been a household of young people in the South whose clothes she, a very young woman then, had mended; there had been a boy who talked nonsense to her much as this boy—Marse Pendleton. But trouble had come; everything had broken like a card-house under an ocean wave. "De fambly" was lost, and she and her young husband, old Uncle Jeems of today, had drifted by devious ways to this Northern city. "Ef you ain't got de money handy dis week, young marse, you kin pay me nex' week thes as well," suggested the she-wolf.

Then the big boy was standing over her, and she

was being patted on the shoulder with a touch that all but brought tears to the black, dim eyes. "Don't you dare pay attention to my drool, or I'll never talk to you again," Lance ordered. "Your sev'nty fo' cents is all right, and lots more. I've got heaps of cash that size, Aunt Basha. But I want to buy Liberty Bonds, and I don't know how in hell I'm going to get big money." The boy was thinking aloud. "How am I to raise two hundred for a couple of bonds, Aunt Basha? Tell me that?" He scratched into his thatch of hair and made a puzzled face.

"What fo' you want big money, young marse?"

"Bonds. Liberty Bonds. You know what that is?"

"Naw, sir."

"You don't? Well you ought to," said Lance. "There isn't a soul in this country who oughtn't to have a bond. It's this way. You know we're fighting a war?"

"Yassir. Young Ananias Johnson, he's Sist' Amanda's boy, he done tole his Unk Jeems 'bout dat war. And Jeems, he done tole me."

Lance regarded her. Was it possible that the ocean upheaval had stirred even the quietest backwater so little? "Well, anyhow, it's the biggest war that ever was on earth."

Aunt Basha shook her head. "You ain't never seed de War of de Rebullium," she stated with superiority. "You's too young. Well, I reckon dis yer war ain't much on to dat war. Naw, sir! Dat ar was a sure 'nough war—yas, sir!"

Lance considered. He decided not to contest the point. "Anyhow Aunt Basha, this is an awfully big war. And if we don't win it the Germans will come over here and murder the most of us, and make you and Uncle Jeems work in the fields from daylight till dark."

"Dem low down white trash!" commented Aunt Basha.

"Yes, and worse. And Uncle Sam can't beat the Germans unless we all help. He needs money to buy guns for the soldiers, and food and clothes. So he's asking everybody—just everybody—to lend him money—every cent they can raise to buy things to win the war. He gives each person who

lends him any, a piece of paper which is a promise to pay it back, and that piece of paper is called a bond—Uncle Sam's promise to pay. Everybody ought to help by giving up every cent they have. The soldiers are giving their lives to save us from the horrible Germans. They're going over there to live in mud and water and sleep in holes of the earth, to be shot and wounded and tortured and killed. They're facing that for our sakes, to save us from worse than death, for you and Uncle Jeems and me, Aunt Basha. Now, oughtn't we to give all we've got to take care of those boys—our soldiers?"

Lance had forgotten his audience, except that he was wording his speech carefully in the simplest English. It went home.

"Oh, my Lawd!" moaned Aunt Basha, sitting down and rocking hard. "Does dey sleep in de col' yeth? Oh, my Lawd have mercy!" It was the first realization she had had of the details of the war. "You ain't gwine over dar, is you young marse, honey?" she asked anxiously.

"I wish to God I was," spoke Lance through set

teeth. "No, Aunt Basha, they won't take me. Because I'm lame. I'd give my life to go. And because I can't fight I *must* buy bonds. Do you see? I must. I'd sell my soul to get money for Liberty Bonds. Oh, God!" Lance was as if alone, with only that anxious old black face gazing up at him. "Oh, God—it's my country!"

Suddenly the rich flowing voice spoke. "Young marse, it's my country too, sir," said Aunt Basha.

Lance turned and stared. How much did the words mean to the old woman? In a moment he knew.

"Yas, my young marseter, dis yer America's de ole black 'oman's country, thes like it's fine young white man's, like you, sir. I gwine give my las' cent, like you say. Yas, I gwine do dat. I got two hun'erd dollars, sir; I b'en a-savin' and a-savin' for Jeems 'n me 'ginst when we git ole, but I gwine give dat to my country. I want Unc' Sam to buy good food for dem boys in the muddy water. Bacon 'n hominy, sir—'n corn bread, what's nourishin'. 'N I want you to git de—de Liberty what-je-call-'ems. Yassir. 'Caze you ain't got

no ma to he'ep you out, 'n de ole black 'oman's gwine to be de bes' ma she know how to her young marse. I got de money tied up—" she leaned forward and whispered—"in a stockin' in de bottom draw' ob de chist unner Jeem's good coat. Tomorrow I gwine fetch it, 'n you go buy yo' what-je-calls-'ems."

Lance went across and knelt on the floor beside her and put his arms around the stout figure. He had been brought up with a colored mammy and this affection seemed natural and homelike. "Aunt Basha, you're one of the saints," he said. "And I love you for it. But I wouldn't take your blessed two hundred, not for anything on earth. I'd be a hound to take it. If you want some bonds"—it flashed to him that the money would be safer so than in the stocking under Jeem's coat —"why, I'll get them for you. Come into the *Daybreak* office and ask for me, say—Monday. And I'll go with you to the bank and get bonds. Here's my card. Show anybody that at the office." And he gave directions.

Five minutes later the old woman went off

down the street talking half aloud to herself in fragments of sentences about "Liberty what-je-call-'ems" and "my country too." In the little shack uptown that was home for her and her husband she began at once to set forth her new light. Jeems, who added to the family income by taking care of furnaces and doing odd jobs, was grizzled and hobbling of body, but argumentative of soul.

"'Oman," he addressed Aunt Basha, "Unc' Sam got lots o' money. What use he gwine have, great big rich man lak Unc' Sam, fo' yo' two hun'erd? But we got mighty lot o' use fo' dat money, we'uns. An' you gwine gib dat away? Thes lak a 'oman!" which, in other forms, is an argument used by male people of many classes.

Aunt Basha suggested that Young Marse David said something about a piece of paper and Uncle Sam paying back, but Jeems pooh-poohed that.

"Naw, sir. When big rich folks goes round collectin' po' folkses money, is dey liable to pay back? What good piece o' paper gwine do you? Is dey aimin' to let you see de color ob dat money agin? Naw, sir. Dey am not." He proceeded

to another branch of the subject. "War ain' gwine las' long, nohow. Young Ananias he gwine to Franch right soon, an' de yether colored brothers. De Germans dey ain't gwine las' long, once ef dey see us Anglo-Saxons in de scrablin'. Naw, sir.

"White man what come hyer yether day, he say how dey ain't gwine 'low de colored sojers to fight," suggested Aunt Basha. German propaganda reaches far and takes strange shapes.

"Don' jer go to b'lieve dat white man, 'oman," thundered Jeems, thumping with his fist. "He dunno nawthin', an' I reckon he's a liar. Unc' Sam he say we kin fight an' we *gwine* fight. An' de war ain't las' long atter we git to fightin' good."

Aunt Basha, her hands folded on the rounded volume of apron considered deeply. After a time she arrived at a decision.

"Jeems," she began, "yo' cert'nly is a strong reasoner. Yassir. But I got it bo'ne in upon me powerful dat I gotter give dese yer savin's to Unc' Sam. It's my country too, Jeems, same as dem sojers what's fightin', dem boys in de mud what

ain' got a soul to wash fo' 'em. An' lak as not dey mas not dere. Dem boys is fightin', and gittin' wet and hunted up lak young marse say, fo' Aunt Basha and—bress dere hearts"—Aunt Basha broke down, and the upshot was that Jeems washed his hands of an obstinate female and—the savings not being his in any case—gave unwilling consent.

Youth of the sterner set is apt to be casual in making appointments. It had not entered Lance's head to arrange in case he was not at the office. As for Aunt Basha, her theory was that he reigned there over an army of subordinates from morning till evening. So that she was taken aback when told that Mr. Lance was out and no one could say when he would be in. She had risen at dawn and done her housework and much of the fine washing which she "took in," and had then arrayed herself in her best calico dress and newest turban and apron for the great occasion and had reported at the *Daybreak* office at nine-thirty. And young marse wasn't there.

"I'll set and rest ontwell he comes in," she an-

nounced, and retired to a chair against the wall.

There she folded her hands statelily and sat erect, motionless, an image of fine old dignity. But much thinking was going on inside the calm exterior. What was she going to do if young marse did not come back? She had the $200 with her, carefully pinned and double pinned into a pocket in her purple alpaca petticoat. She did not want to take it home. Jeems had submitted this morning, but with mutterings, and a second time there might be trouble. The savings were indeed hers, but a rebellious husband in high finance is an embarrassment. Deeply Aunt Basha considered, and memory whispered something about a bank. Young marse was going to the bank with her to give her money to Uncle Sam. She had just passed a bank. Why could she not go alone? Somebody certainly would tell her what to do. Possibly Uncle Sam was there himself—for Aunt Basha's conception of our national myth was half mystical, half practical—as a child with Santa Claus. In any case banks were responsible places, and somebody would look after her. She

crossed to the desk where two or three young men appeared to be doing most of the world's business.

"Marsters!"

The three looked up.

"Good mawnin', young marsters. I'm 'bleeged to go now. I cert'nly thank you-all fo' lettin' me set in de cheer. I won't wait fo' marse David Lance no mo', sir. Good mawnin', marsters."

A smiling courtesy dropped, and she was gone.

"I'll be darned!" remarked reporter number one.

"Where did that blow in from?" added reporter number two.

But reporter number three had imagination. "The dearest old soul I've seen in a blue moon," said he.

Aunt Basha proceeded down the street and more than one in the crowd glanced twice at the erect, stout figure swinging, like a quaint and stately ship in full sail, among the steam-tuggery of up-to-date humanity. There were high steps leading to the bank entrance, impressive and alarming to Aunt Basha. She paused to take

breath for this adventure. Was a humble old colored woman permitted to walk freely in at those grand doors, open iron-work and enormous of size? She did not know. She stood a moment, suddenly frightened and helpless, not daring to go on, looking about for a friendly face. And behold! there it was—the friendliest face in the world, it seemed to the lost old soul—a vision of loveliness. It was the face of a beautiful young white lady in beautiful clothes who had stepped from a huge limousine. She was coming up the steps, straight to Aunt Basha. She saw the old woman, saw her anxious hesitation, and halted. The next event was a heavenly smile. Aunt Basha knew the repartee to that, and the smile that shone in answer was as heavenly in its way as the girl's.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" spoke a voice of gentleness.

And the world had turned over and come up right side on top. "Mawnin', Miss. Yas'm, I was fixin' to go in dat big do' yander, but I dunno as I'm 'lowed. Is I 'lowed, young miss, to go in dar an' gib my two hun'erd to Unc' Sam?"

"What?" The tone was kindness itself, but bewildered.

Aunt Basha elucidated. "I got two hun'erd, young miss, and I cert'nly want to gib it to Unc' Sam to buy clo'se for dem boys what's fightin' for us in Franch."

"I wonder," spoke the girl, gazing thoughtfully, "if you want to get a Liberty Bond?"

"Yas'm—yas, miss. Dat's sho' it, a whatjerma-call-'em. I know'd 'twas some cu'is name lak dat." The vision nodded her head.

"I'm going in to do that very thing myself," she said. "Come with me. I'll help you get yours."

Aunt Basha followed joyfully in the wake, and behold, everything was easy. Ready attention met them and shortly they sat in a private office carpeted in velvet and upholstered in grandeur. A personage gave grave attention to what the vision was saying.

"I met—I don't know your name," she interrupted herself, turning to the old negro woman.

Aunt Basha rose and curtsied. "Dey christened

me Bathsheba Jeptha, young miss," she stated. "But I'se rightly known as Aunt Basha. Jes' Aunt Basha, young miss. And marster."

A surname was disinterred by the efforts of the personage which appeared to startle the vision.

"Why, it's our name, Mr. Davidson," she exclaimed. "She said Cabell."

Aunt Basha turned inquiring, vague eyes. "Is it, honey? Is yo' a Cabell?"

And then the personage, who was, after all, cashier of the Ninth National Bank and very busy, cut in. "Ah, yes! A well known Southern name. Doubtless a large connection. And now Mrs.—ah—Cabell——"

"I'd be 'bleeged ef yo' jis' name me Aunt Basha, marster."

And marster, rather *intrigué* because he, being a New Englander, had never in his life addressed as "aunt" a person who was not sister to his mother or his father, nevertheless became human and smiled. "Well, then, Aunt Basha."

At a point a bit later he was again jolted when he asked the amount which his newly adopted

"aunt" wanted to invest. For an answer she hauled high the folds of her frock, unconscious of his gasp or of the vision's repressed laughter, and went on to attack the clean purple alpaca petticoat which was next in rank. Mr. Davidson thought it wise at this point to make an errand across the room. He need not have bothered as far as Aunt Basha was concerned. When he came back she was again *à la mode* and held an ancient beaded purse at which she gazed. Out of a less remote pocket she drew steel spectacles, which were put on. Mr. Davidson repeated his question of how much.

"It's all hyer, marster. It's two hun'erd dollars, sir. I ben savin' up fo' twenty years an' mo', and me'n Jeems, we ben countin' it every mont, so I reckon I knows."

The man and the girl regarded the old woman a moment. "It's a large sum for you to invest," Mr. Davidson said.

"Yassir. Yas, marster. It's right smart money. But I sho' am glad to gib dis hyer to Unc' Sam for dem boys."

The cashier of the Ninth National Bank lifted his eyes from the blank he was filling out and looked at Aunt Basha thoughtfully. "You understand, of course, that the Government—Uncle Sam—is only borrowing your money. That you may have it back any time you wish."

Aunt Basha drew herself up. "I don' wish it, sir. I'm gibin' dis hyer gif,' a free gif' to my country. Yassir. It's de onliest country I got, an' I reckon I got a right to gib dis hyer what I earned doin' fine washin' and i'nin. I gibs it to my country. I don't wan' to hyer any talk 'bout payin' back. Naw, sir."

It took Mr. Davidson and the vision at least ten minutes to make clear to Aunt Basha the character and habits of a Liberty Bond, and then, though gratified with the ownership of what seemed a brand new $200 and a valuable slip of paper—which meandered shamelessly into the purple alpaca petticoat—yet she was disappointed.

"White folks sho' am cu'is," she reflected. "Now who'd 'a thought 'bout dat way ob raisin'

money! Not me—no, Lawd! It do beat me." With that she threw an earnest glance at Mr. Davidson, lean and tall and gray, with a clipped pointed beard. "'Scuse me, marster," said Aunt Basha, "mout I ask a quexshun?"

"Surely," agreed Mr. Davidson blandly.

"Is you'—'scuse de ole 'oman, sir—is you' Unc' Sam?"

The "quexshun" left the personage too staggered to laugh. But the girl filled the staid place with gay peals. Then she leaned over and patted the wrinkled and bony worn black knuckles. "Bless your dear heart," she said; "no, he isn't, Aunt Basha. He's awfully important and good to us all, and he knows everything. But he's not Uncle Sam."

The bewilderment of the old face melted to smiles. "Dar, now," she brought out; "I mout 'a know'd, becaze he didn't have no red striped pants. An' de whiskers is diff'ent, too. 'Scuse me, sir, and thank you kindly, marster. Thank you, young miss. De Lawd bress you fo' helpin' de ole 'oman." She had risen and she dropped her

old time curtsey at this point. "Mawnin' to yo', marster and young miss."

But the girl sprang up. "You can't go," she said. "I'm going to take you to my house to see my grandmother. She's Southern, and our name is Cabell, and likely—maybe—she knew your people down South."

"Maybe, young miss. Dar's lots o' Cabells," agreed Aunt Basha, and in three minutes found herself where she had never thought to be, inside a fine private car.

She was dumb with rapture and excitement, and quite unable to answer the girl's friendly words except with smiles and nods. The girl saw how it was and let her be, only patting the calico arm once and again reassuringly. "I wonder if she didn't want to come. I wonder if I've frightened her," thought Eleanor Cabell. When into the silence broke suddenly the rich, high, irresistible music which was Aunt Basha's laugh, and which David Lance had said was pitched on "Q sharp." The girl joined the infectious sound and a moment after that the car stopped.

"This is home," said Eleanor.

Aunt Basha observed, with the liking for magnificence of a servant trained in a large house, the fine façade and the huge size of "home." In a moment she was inside, and "young miss" was carefully escorting her into a sunshiny big room, where a wood fire burned, and a bird sang, and there were books and flowers.

"Wait here, Aunt Basha, dear," Eleanor said, "and I'll get Grandmother." It was exactly like the loveliest of dreams, Aunt Basha told Jeems an hour later. It could not possibly have been true, except that it was. When "Grandmother" came in, slender and white-haired and a bit breathless with this last surprise of a surprising granddaughter, Aunt Basha stood and curtsied her stateliest.

Then suddenly she cried out, "Fo' God! Oh, my Miss Jinny!" and fell on her knees.

Mrs. Cabell gazed down, startled. "Who is it? Oh, whom have you brought me, Eleanor?" She bent to look more closely at Aunt Basha, kneeling, speechless, tears streaming from the brave old

eyes, holding up clasped hand imploring. "It isn't—Oh, my dear, I believe it *is* our own old nurse, Basha, who took care of your father!"

"Yas'm. Yas, Miss Jinny," endorsed Aunt Basha, climbing to her feet. "Yas, my Miss Jinny, bress de Lawd. It's Basha." She turned to the girl. "Dis yer chile ain't nebber my young Marse Pendleton's chile!"

But it was; and there was explanation and laughter and tears, too, but tears of happiness. Then it was told how, after that crash of disaster was over, the family had tried in vain to find Basha and Jeems; had tried always. It was told how a great fortune had come to them in the turn of a hand by the discovery of an unsuspected salt mine on the old estate; how "young Marse Pendleton," a famous surgeon now, had by that time made for himself a career and a home in this Northern state; how his wife had died young, and his mother, "Miss Jinny," had come to live with him and take care of his one child, the vision. And then the simple annals of Aunt Basha and Uncle Jeems were also told, the long struggle to

keep respectable, only respectable; the years of toil and frugality and saving—saving the two hundred dollars which she had offered this morning as a "free gif'" to her country. In these annals loomed large for some time past the figure of a "young marse" who had been good to her and helped her much and often in spite of his own "*res augusta domi*,"—which was not Aunt Basha's expression. The story was told of his oration in the little hall bedroom about Liberty "whatjer-m'-call-'ems," and of how the boy had stirred the soul of the old woman with his picture of the soldiers in the trenches.

"So it come to me, Miss Jinny, how ez me'n Jeems was thes two wuthless ole niggers, an' hadn't fur to trabble on de road anyways, an' de Lawd would pervide, an' ef He didn't we could scratch grabble some ways. An' dat boy, dat young Marse David, he tole me ever'body ought to gib dey las' cent fo' Unc' Sam an' de sojers. So"—Aunt Basha's high, inexpressibly sweet laughter of pure glee filled the room—"so I thes up'n handed over my two hun'erd."

"It was the most beautiful and wonderful thing that's been done in all wonderful America," pronounced Eleanor Cabell as one having authority. She went on. "But that young man, your young Marse David, why doesn't he fight if he's such a patriot?"

"Bress gracious, honey," Aunt Basha hurried to explain, "he's a-honin' to fight. But he cayn't. He's lame. He goes a-limpin'. Dey won't took him."

"Oh!" retracted Eleanor. Then: "What's his name? Maybe father could cure him."

"He name Lance. Marse David Lance."

Why should Miss Jinny jump? "David Lance? It can't be, Aunt Basha."

With no words Aunt Basha began hauling up her skirts and Eleanor, remembering Mr. Davidson's face, went into gales of laughter. Aunt Basha halted, looked at her with an inquiring gaze of adoration. "Yas'm, my young miss. He name dat. I done put the cyard in my ridicule. Yas'm, it's here." The antique bead purse was opened and Lance's card was presented to Miss Jinny.

"Eleanor! This is too wonderful—look!"

Eleanor looked, and read: "Mr. David Pendleton Lance." "Why, Grandmother, it's Dad's name — David Pendleton Cabell. And the Lance——"

Mrs. Cabell, stronger on genealogy than the younger generation, took up the wandering thread. "The 'Lance' is my mother's maiden name—Virginia Lance she was. And her brother was David Pendleton Lance. I named your father for him because he was born on the day my young uncle was killed, in the battle of Shiloh."

"Well, then—who's this sailing around with our family name?"

"Who is he? But he must be our close kin, Eleanor. My Uncle David left—that's it. His wife came from California and she went out there again to live with her baby. I hadn't heard of them for years. Why, Eleanor, this boy's father must have been—my first cousin. My young Uncle David's baby. Those years of trouble after we left home wiped out so much. I lost track—but that doesn't matter now. Aunt Basha," spoke

Miss Jinny in a quick, efficient voice, which suddenly recalled the blooming and businesslike mother of the young brood of years ago, "Aunt Basha, where can I find your young Marse David?"

Aunt Basha smiled radiantly and shook her head. "Cayn't fin' him, honey? I done tried, and he warn't dar."

"Wasn't where?"

"At de orfice, Miss Jinny."

"At what office?"

"Why, de *Daybreak* orfice, cose, Miss Jinny. What yether orfice he gwine be at?"

"Oh!" Miss Jinny followed with ease the windings of the African mind. "He's a reporter on the *Daybreak* then."

"'Cose he is, Miss Jinny, ma'am. Whatjer reckon?"

Miss Jinny reflected. Then: "Eleanor, call up the *Daybreak* office and ask if Mr. Lance is there and if he will speak to me."

But Aunt Basha was right. Mr. Lance was not

at the *Daybreak* office. Mrs. Cabell was as grieved as a child.

"We'll find him, Grandmother," Eleanor asserted. "Why, of course—it's a morning paper. He's home sleeping. I'll get his number." She caught up the telephone book.

Aunt Basha chuckled musically. "He ain't got no tullaphome, honey chile. No, my Lawd! Whar dat boy gwine git money for tullaphome and contraptions? No, my Lawd!"

"How will we get him?" despaired Mrs. Cabell. The end of the council was a cryptic note in the hand of Jackson, the chauffeur, and orders to bring back the addressee at any cost.

Meanwhile, as Jackson stood in his smart dark livery taking orders with the calmness of efficiency, feeling himself capable of getting that young man, howsoever hidden, the young man himself was wasting valuable hours off in day-dreams. In the one shabby big chair of the hall bedroom he sat and smoked a pipe, and stared at a microscopic fire in a toy grate. It was extravagant of David Lance to have a fire at all, but as long as

he gave up meals to do it likely it was his own affair. The luxuries mean more than the necessities to plenty of us. With comfort in this, his small luxury, he watched the play of light and shadow, and the pulsing of the live scarlet and orange in the heart of the coals. He needed comfort today, the lonely boy. Two men of the office force who had gotten their commissions lately at an officer's training camp had come in last night before leaving for Camp Devens; everybody had crowded about and praised them and envied them. They had been joked about the sweaters, and socks made by mothers and sweethearts, and about the trouble Uncle Sam would have with their mass of mail. The men in the office had joined to give each a goodbye present. Pride in them, the honor of them to all the force was shown at every turn; and beyond it all there was the look of grave contentment in their eyes which is the mark of the men who have counted the cost and given up everything for their country. Most of all soldiers, perhaps, in this great war, the American fights for an ideal. Also he knows it; down to

the most ignorant drafted man, that inspiration has lifted the army and given it a star in the East to follow. The American fights for an ideal; the sign of it is in the faces of the men in uniform whom one meets everywhere in the street.

David Lance, splendidly powerful and fit except for the small limp which was his undoing, suffered as he joined, whole-hearted, in the glory of those who were going. Back in his room alone, smoking, staring into his dying fire, he was dreaming how it would feel if he were the one who was to march off in uniform to take his man's share of the hardship and comradeship and adventure and suffering, and of the salvation of the world. With that, he took his pipe from his mouth and grinned broadly into the fire as another phase of the question appeared. How would it feel if he was somebody's special soldier, like both of those boys, sent off by a mother or a sweetheart, by both possibly, overstocked with things knitted for him, with all the necessities and luxuries of a soldier's outfit that could be thought of. He remembered how

Jarvis, the artillery captain, had showed them, proud and modest, his field glass.

"It's a good one," he had said. "My mother gave it to me. It has the Mills scale."

And Annesley, the kid, who had made his lieutenant's commission so unexpectedly, had broken in: "That's no shakes to the socks I've got on. If somebody'll pull off my boots I'll show you. Made in Poughkeepsie. A dozen pairs. *Not* my mother."

Lance smiled wistfully. Since his own mother died, eight years ago, he had drifted about unanchored, and though women had inevitably held out hands to the tall and beautiful lad, they were not the sort he cared for, and there had been none of his own sort in his life. Fate might so easily have given him a chance to serve his country, with also, maybe, just the common sweet things added which almost every fellow had, and a woman or two to give him a sendoff and to write him letters over there sometimes. To be a soldier—and to be somebody's soldier! Why, these two things would mean Heaven! And hundreds of thousands of Amer-

ican boys had these and thought nothing of it. Fate certainly had been a bit stingy with a chap, considered David Lance, smiling into his little fire with a touch of wistful self-pity.

At this moment Fate, in smart, dark livery, knocked at his door. "Come in," shouted Lance cheerfully.

The door opened and he stared. Somebody had lost the way. Chauffeurs in expensive livery did not come to his hall bedroom. "Is dis yer Mr. Lance?" inquired Jackson.

Lance admitted it and got the note and read it while Jackson, knowing his Family intimately, knew that something pleasant and surprising was afoot and assisted with a discreet regard. When he saw that the note was finished, Jackson confidently put in his word. "Cyar's waitin', sir. Orders is I was to tote you to de house."

Lance's eyes glowered as he looked up. "Tell me one thing," he demanded.

"Yas, sir," grinned Jackson, pleased with this young gentleman from a very poor neighborhood, who quite evidently was, all the same, "quality,"

"Are you," inquired Lance, "are you any relation to Aunt Basha?"

Jackson, for all his efficiency a friendly soul, forgot the dignity of his livery and broke into chuckles. "Naw, sir; naw, sir. I dunno de lady, sir; I reckon I ain't, sir," answered Jackson.

"All right, then, but it's the mistake of your life not to be. She's the best on earth. Wait till I brush my hair," said Lance, and did it.

Inside three minutes he was in the big Pierce-Arrow, almost as unfamiliar, almost as delightful to him as to Aunt Basha, and speeding gloriously through the streets. The note had said that some kinspeople had just discovered him, and would he come straight to them for lunch.

Mrs. Cabell and Eleanor crowded frankly to the window when the car stopped.

"I can't wait to see David's boy," cried Mrs. Cabell, and Eleanor, wise of her generation, followed with:

"Now, don't expect much; he may be deadly."

And out of the limousine stepped, unconscious, the beautiful David, and handed Jackson a dollar.

"Oh!" gasped Mrs. Cabell.

"It was silly, but I love it," added Eleanor; and David limped swiftly up the steps, and one heard Ebenezer, the butler, opening the door with suspicious promptness. Everyone in the house knew, mysteriously, that uncommon things were doing.

"Pendleton," spoke Mrs. Cabell, lying in wait for her son, the great doctor, as he came from his office at lunch time, "Pen, dear, let me tell you something extraordinary." She told him, condensing as might be, and ended with: "And oh, Pen, he's the most adorable boy I ever saw. And so lonely and so poor and so plucky. Heartbroken because he's lame and can't serve. You'll cure him, Pen, dear, won't you, for his country?"

The tall, tired man bent down and kissed his mother. "Mummy, I'm not God Almighty. But I'll do my darndest for anything you want. Show me the paragon."

The paragon shot up, with the small unevenness which was his limp, and faced the big doctor on a level. The two pairs of eyes from their un-

common height, looked inquiringly into each other.

"I hear you have my name," spoke Dr. Cabell tersely.

"Yes, sir," said David. "And I'm glad."

And the doctor knew that he also liked the paragon.

Lunch was an epic meal above and below stairs. Jeems had been fetched by that black Mercury Jackson, messenger today of the gods of joy. And the two old souls had been told by Mrs. Cabell that never again should they work hard or be anxious or want for anything. The sensation-loving colored servants rejoiced in the events as a personal jubilee, and made much of Aunt Basha and Unc' Jeems till their old heads reeled. Above stairs the scroll unrolled more or less decorously, yet in magic colors unbelievable. Somehow David had told about Annesley and Jarvis last night.

"Somebody knitted him a whole dozen pairs of socks!" he commented. "Really she did. He said

so. Think of a girl being as good to a chap as that."

"I'll knit you a dozen," Miss Eleanor Cabell capped his sentence, like the Amen at the end of a High Church prayer. "I'll begin this afternoon."

"And, David," said Mrs. Cabell—for it had got to be "David" and "Cousin Virginia" by now—"David, when you get your commission, I'll have your field glass ready, and a few other things."

Dr. Cabell lifted his eyes from his chop. "You'll spoil that boy," he stated. "And, mother, I pointed out that I'm not the Almighty, even on joints. I haven't looked at that game leg yet. I said it *might* be curable."

"That boy" looked up, smiling, with long years of loneliness and lameness written in the back of his glance. "Please don't make 'em stop, doctor," he begged. "I won't spoil easily. I haven't any start. And this is a fairy-story to me—wonderful people like you letting me—letting me belong. I can't believe I won't wake up. Don't

you imagine it will go to my head. It won't. I'm just so blamed—grateful."

The deep young voice trailed, and the doctor made haste to answer. "You're all right, my lad," he said. "As soon as lunch is over you come into the surgery and I'll have a glance at the leg." Which was done.

After half an hour David came out, limping, pale and radiant. "I can't believe it," he spoke breathless. "He says—it's a simple—operation. I'll walk—like other men. I'll be right for—the service." He choked.

At that Mrs. Cabell sped across the room and put up hands either side of the young face and drew it down and kissed the lad whom she did not, this morning, know to be in existence. "You blessed boy," she whispered, "you shall fight for America, and you'll be our soldier, and we'll be your people." And David, kissing her again, looked over her head and saw Eleanor glowing like a rose, and with a swift, unphrased shock of happiness felt in his soul the wonder of a heaven that might happen. Then they were all about the fire,

half-crying, laughing, as people do on top of strong feelings.

"Aunt Basha did it all," said David. "If Aunt Basha hadn't been the most magnificent old black woman who ever carried a snow-white soul, if she hadn't been the truest patriot in all America, if she hadn't given everything for her country—I'd likely never have—found you." His eyes went to the two kind and smiling faces, and his last word was a whisper. It was so much to have found. All he had dreamed, people of his own, a straight leg—and—his heart's desire—service to America.

Mrs. Cabell spoke softly. "I've lived a long time and I've seen over and over that a good deed spreads happiness like a pebble thrown into water, more than a bad one spreads evil, for good is stronger and more contagious. We've gained this dear kinsman today because of the nobility of an old negro woman."

David Lance lifted his head quickly. "It was no small nobility," he said. "As Miss Cabell was saying——"

"I'm your cousin Eleanor," interrupted Miss Cabell.

David lingered over the name. "Thank you, my cousin Eleanor. It's as you said, nothing more beautiful and wonderful has been done in wonderful America than this thing Aunt Basha did. It was as gallant as a soldier at the front, for she offered what meant possibly her life."

"Her little two hundred," Eleanor spoke gently. "And so cross at the idea of being paid back! She wanted to *give* it."

David's face gleamed with a thought as he stared into the firelight. "You see," he worked out his idea, "by the standards of the angels a gift must be big not according to its size but according to what's left. If you have millions and give a few thousand you practically give nothing, for you have millions left. But Aunt Basha had nothing left. The angels must have beaten drums and blown trumpets and raised Cain all over Paradise while you sat in the bank, my cousin Eleanor, for the glory of that record gift.

No plutocrat in the land has touched what Aunt Basha did for her country."

Eleanor's eyes, sending out not only clear vision but a brown light as of the light of stars, shone on the boy. She bent forward, and her slender arms were about her knee. She gazed at David, marveling. How could it be that a human being might have all that David appeared to her to have —clear brain, crystal simplicity, manliness, charm of personality, and such strength and beauty besides!

"Yes," she said, "Aunt Basha gave the most. She has more right than any of us to say that it's her country." She was silent a moment and then spoke softly a single word. "America!" said Eleanor reverently.

America! Her sound has gone out into all lands and her words into the end of the world. America, who in a year took four million of sons untried, untrained, and made them into a mighty army; who adjusted a nation of a hundred million souls in a turn of the hand to unknown and unheard of conditions. America, whose greatest

glory yet is not these things. America, of whom scholars and statesmen and generals and multi-millionaires say with throbbing pride today: "This is my country," but of whom the least in the land, having brought what they may, however small, to lay on that flaming altar of the world's safety—of whom the least in the land may say as truly as the greatest, "This is my country, too."

THE SWALLOW

THE SWALLOW

THE Château Frontenac at Quebec is a turreted pile of masonry wandering down a cliff over the very cellars of the ancient Castle of St. Louis. A twentieth-century hotel, it simulates well a mediæval fortress and lifts against the cold blue northern sky an atmosphere of history. Old voices whisper about its towers and above the clanging hoofs in its paved court; deathless names are in the wind which blows from the "fleuve," the great St. Lawrence River far below. Jacques Cartier's voice was heard hereabouts away back in 1539, and after him others, Champlain and Frontenac, and Father Jogues and Mother Marie of the Conception and Montcalm — upstanding fighting men and heroic women and hardy discoverers of New France walked about here once, on the "Rock" of Quebec; there is romance here if anywhere on earth. Today a new knighthood hails that past. Uniforms are thick in steep streets;

men are wearing them with empty sleeves, on crutches, or maybe whole of body yet with racked faces which register a hell lived through. Canada guards heroism of many vintages, from four hundred years back through the years to Wolfe's time, and now a new harvest. Centuries from now children will be told, with the story of Cartier, the tale of Vimy Ridge, and while the Rock stands the records of Frenchmen in Canada, of Canadians in France will not die.

Always when I go to the Château I get a table, if I can, in the smaller dining-room. There the illusion of antiquity holds through modern luxury; there they have hung about the walls portraits of the worthies of old Quebec; there Samuel Champlain himself, made into bronze and heroic of size, aloft on his pedestal on the terrace outside, lifts his plumed hat and stares in at the narrow windows, turning his back on river and lower city. One disregards waiters in evening clothes and up-to-date table appointments, and one looks at Champlain and the "fleuve," and the Isle d'Orléans lying long and low, and one thinks of little ships,

storm-beaten, creeping up to this grim bigness ignorant of continental events trailing in their wake.

I was on my way to camp in a club a hundred miles north of the gray-walled town when I drifted into the little dining-room for dinner one night in early September in 1918. The head-waiter was an old friend; he came to meet me and piloted me past a tableful of military color, four men in service uniforms.

"Some high officers, sir," spoke the head waiter. "In conference here, I believe. There's a French officer, and an English, and our Canadian General Sampson, and one of your generals, sir."

I gave my order and sat back to study the group. The waiter had it straight; there was the horizon blue of France; there was the Englishman tall and lean and ruddy and expressionless and handsome; there was the Canadian, more of our own cut, with a mobile, alert face. The American had his back to me and all I could see was an erect carriage, a brown head going to gray, and the one star of a brigadier-general on his shoulders.

The beginnings of my dinner went fast, but after soup there was a lull before greater food, and I paid attention again to my neighbors. They were talking in English.

"A Huron of Lorette—does that mean a full-blooded Indian of the Huron tribe, such as one reads of in Parkman?" It was the Englishman who asked, responding to something I had not heard.

"There's no such animal as a full-blooded Huron," stated the Canadian. "They're all French-Indian half-breeds now. Lorette's an interesting scrap of history, just the same. You know your Parkman? You remember how the Iroquois followed the defeated Hurons as far as the Isle d'Orléans, out there?" He nodded toward where the big island lay in the darkness of the St. Lawrence. "Well, what was left after that chase took refuge fifteen miles north of Quebec, and founded what became and has stayed the village of Indian Lorette. There are now about five or six hundred people, and it's a nation. Under its own laws, dealing by treaty with Canada, not sub-

ject to draft, for instance. Queer, isn't it? They guard their identity vigilantly. Every one, man or woman, who marries into the tribe, as they religiously call it, is from then on a Huron. And only those who have Huron blood may own land in Lorette. The Hurons were, as Parkman put it, 'the gentlemen of the savages,' and the tradition lasts. The half-breed of today is a good sort, self-respecting and brave, not progressive, but intelligent, with pride in his inheritance, his courage, and his woodscraft."

The Canadian, facing me, spoke distinctly and much as Americans speak; I caught every word. But I missed what the French general threw back rapidly. I wondered why the Frenchman should be excited. I myself was interested because my guides, due to meet me at the club station tomorrow, were all half-breed Hurons. But why the French officer? What should a Frenchman of France know about backwaters of Canadian history? And with that he suddenly spoke slowly, and I caught several sentences of incisive if halting English.

"Zey are to astonish, ze Indian Hurong. For ze sort of work special-ment, as like scouting on a stomach. Qu-vick, ver' qu-vick, and ver' quiet. By dark places of danger. One sees zat nozzing at all af-frightens zose Hurong. Also zey are alike snakes, one cannot catch zem—zey slide; zey are slippy. To me it is to admire zat courage most —personnel—selfeesh—because an Hurong safe my life dere is six mont', when ze Boches make ze drive of ze mont' of March."

At this moment food arrived in a flurry, and I lost what came after. But I had forgotten the Château Frontenac; I had forgotten the group of officers, serious and responsible, who sat on at the next table. I had forgotten even the war. A word had sent my mind roaming. "Huron!" Memory and hope at that repeated word rose and flew away with me. Hope first. Tomorrow I was due to drop civilization and its tethers.

"Allah does not count the days spent out of doors." In Walter Pater's story of "Marius the Epicurean" one reads of a Roman country-seat called "Ad Vigilias Albas," "White Nights." A

sense of dreamless sleep distils from the name. One remembers such nights, and the fresh world of the awakening in the morning. There are such days. There are days which ripple past as a night of sleep and leave a worn brain at the end with the same satisfaction of renewal; white days. Crystal they are, like the water of streams, as musical and eventless; as elusive of description as the ripple over rocks or brown pools foaming.

The days and months and years of a life race with accelerating pace and youth goes and age comes as the days race, but one is not older for the white days. The clock stops, the blood runs faster, furrows in gray matter smooth out, time forgets to put in tiny crow's-feet and the extra gray hair a week, or to withdraw by the hundredth of an ounce the oxygen from the veins; one grows no older for the days spent out of doors. Allah does not count them.

It was days like these which hope held ahead as I paid earnest attention to the good food set before me. And behold, beside the pleasant vision of hope rose a happy-minded sister called memory.

She took the word "Huron," this kindly spirit, and played magic with it, and the walls of the Château rolled into rustling trees and running water.

I was sitting, in my vision, in flannel shirt and knickerbockers, on a log by a little river, putting together fishing tackle and casting an eye, off and on, where rapids broke cold over rocks and whirled into foam-flecked, shadowy pools. There should be trout in those shadows.

"Take the butt, Rafael, while I string the line."

Rafael slipped across—still in my vision of memory—and was holding my rod as a rod should be held, not too high or too low, or too far or too near—right. He was an old Huron, a chief of Indian Lorette, and woodscraft was to him as breathing.

"A varry light rod," commented Rafael in his low voice which held no tones out of harmony with water in streams or wind in trees. "A varry light, good rod," paying meanwhile strict attention to his job. "M'sieu go haf a luck today. I t'ink M'sieu go catch a beeg fish on dat river. Water

high enough—not too high. And cold." He shivered a little. "Cold last night—varry cold nights begin now. Good hun-ting wedder."

"Have you got a moose ready for me on the little lake, Rafael? It's the 1st of September next week and I expect you to give me a shot before the 3d."

Rafael nodded. "Oui, m'sieur. First day." The keen-eyed, aquiline old face was as of a prophet. "We go get moose first day. I show you." With that the laughter-loving Frenchman in him flooded over the Indian hunter; for a second the two inheritances played like colors in shot silk, producing an elusive fabric, Rafael's charm. "If nights get so colder, m'sieur go need moose skin kip him warm."

I was looking over my flies now, the book open before me, its fascinating pages of color more brilliant than an old missal, and maybe as filled with religion—the peace of God, charity which endureth, love to one's neighbor. I chose a Parmachene Belle for hand-fly, always good in

Canadian waters. "A moose-skin hasn't much warmth, has it, Rafael?"

The hunter was back, hawk-eyed. "But yes, m'sieu. Moose skin one time safe me so I don' freeze to death. But it hol' me so tight so I nearly don' get loose in de morning."

"What do you mean?" I was only half listening, for a brown hackle and a Montreal were competing for the middle place on my cast, and it was a vital point. But Rafael liked to tell a story, and had come by now to a confidence in my liking to hear him. He flashed a glance to gather up my attention, and cleared his throat and began: "Dat was one time—I go on de woods—hunt wid my fader-in-law—*mon beau-père*. It was mont' of March—and col'—but ver' col' and wet. So it happen we separate, my fader-in-law and me, to hunt on both side of large enough river. And I kill moose. What, m'sieur? What sort of gun? Yes. It was rifle—what one call flint-lock. Large round bore. I cast dat beeg ball myself, what I kill dat moose. Also it was col'. And so it happen my matches got wet, but yes, ev-very one.

So I couldn' buil' fire. I was tired, yes, and much col'. I t'ink in my head to hurry and skin dat moose and wrap myself in dat skin and go sleep on de snow because if not I would die, I was so col' and so tired. I do dat. I skin heem—*je le plumait*—de beeg moose—beeg skin. Skin all warm off moose; I wrap all aroun' me and dig hole and lie down on deep snow and draw skin over head and over feet, and fol' arms, so"—Rafael illustrated—"and I hol' it aroun' wid my hands. And I get warm right away, warm as bread toast. So I been slippy, and heavy wid tired, and I got comfortable in dat moose skin and I go aslip quick. I wake early on morning, and dat skin got froze tight, like box made on wood, and I hol' in dat wid my arms fol' so, and my head down so"—illustrations again—"and I can't move, not one inch. No. What, m'sieur? Yes, I was enough warm, me. But I lie lak dat and can't move, and I t'ink somet'ing. I t'ink I got die lak dat, in moose-skin. If no sun come, I did got die. But dat day sun come and be warm, and moose skin melt lil' bit, slow, and I push lil' bit wid shoulder, and after

while I got ice broke, on moose skin, and I crawl out. Yes. I don' die yet."

Rafael's chuckle was an amen to his saga, and at once, with one of his lightning changes, he was austere.

"M'sieur go need beeg trout tonight; not go need moose skin till nex' wik. Ze rod is ready take feesh. I see feesh jump by ole log. Not much room to cast, but m'sieur can do it. Shall I carry rod down to river for m'sieur?"

In not so many words as I have written, but in clear pictures which comprehended the words, Memory, that temperamental goddess of moods, had, at the prick of the word "Huron," shaken out this soft-colored tapestry of the forest, and held it before my eyes. And as she withdrew this one, others took its place and at length I was musing profoundly, as I put more of something on my plate and tucked it away into my anatomy. I mused about Rafael, the guide of sixty, who had begun a life of continued labor at eight years; I considered the undying Indian in him; how with the father who was "French of Picardy"—the

white blood being a pride to Rafael—he himself, yes, and the father also, for he had married a "*sauvagess*," a Huron woman—had belonged to the tribe and were accounted Hurons; I considered Rafael's proud carriage, his classic head and carved features, his Indian austerity and his French mirth weaving in and out of each other; I considered the fineness and the fearlessness of his spirit, which long hardship had not blunted; I reflected on the tales he had told me of a youth forced to fight the world. "*On a vu de le misère*," Rafael had said: "One has seen trouble"—shaking his head, with lines of old suffering emerging from the reserve of his face like writing in sympathetic ink under heat. And I marvelled that through such fire, out of such neglect, out of lack of opportunity and bitter pressure, the steel of a character should have been tempered to gentleness and bravery and honor.

For it was a very splendid old boy who was cooking for me and greasing my boots and going off with me after moose; putting his keen ancestral instincts of three thousand years at my ser-

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vice for three dollars a day. With my chances would not Rafael have been a bigger man than I? At least never could I achieve that grand air, that austere repose of manner which he had got with no trouble at all from a line of unwashed but courageous old bucks, thinking highly of themselves for untold generations, and killing everything which thought otherwise. I laughed all but aloud at this spot in my meditations, as a special vision of Rafael rose suddenly, when he had stated, on a day, his views of the great war. He talked plain language about the Germans. He specified why he considered the nation a disgrace to humanity—most people, not German, agree on the thesis and its specifications. Then the fire of his ancient fighting blood blazed through restraint of manner. He drew up his tall figure, slim-waisted, deep-shouldered, every inch sliding muscle. "I am too old to go on first call to army," said Rafael. "Zey will not take me. Yes, and on second call. Maybe zird time. But if time come when army take me—I go. If I may kill four Germans I will be content," stated Rafael con-

cisely. And his warrior forebears would have been proud of him as he stated it.

My reflections were disturbed here by the American general at the next table. He was spoken to by his waiter and shot up and left the room, carrying, however, his napkin in his hand, so that I knew he was due to come back. A half sentence suggested a telephone. I watched the soldierly back with plenty of patriotic pride; this was the sort of warrior my country turned out now by tens of thousands. With that he returned, and as I looked up into his face, behold it was Fitzhugh.

My chair went banging as I sprang toward him. "Jim!"

And the general's calm dignity suddenly was the radiant grin of the boy who had played and gone to school and stolen apples with me for a long bright childhood—the boy lost sight of these last years of his in the army. "Dave!" he cried out. "Old Davy Cram!" And his arm went around my shoulder regardless of the public. "My word, but I'm glad!" he sputtered. And then: "Come and

have dinner — finish having it. Come to our table." He slewed me about and presented me to the three others.

In a minute I was installed, to the pride of my friend the head waiter, at military headquarters, next to Fitzhugh and the Frenchman. A campact résumé of personal history between Fitzhugh and myself over, I turned to the blue figure on my left hand, Colonel Raffré, of the French army. On his broad chest hung thrilling bits of color, not only the bronze war cross, with its green watered ribbon striped with red, but the blood-red ribbon of the "Great Cross" itself—the cross of the Legion of Honor. I spoke to him in French, which happens to be my second mother tongue, and he met the sound with a beaming welcome.

"I don't do English as one should," he explained in beautiful Parisian. "No gift of tongues in my kit, I fear; also I'm a bit embarrassed at practising on my friends. It's a relief to meet some one who speaks perfectly French, as m'sieur."

M'sieur was gratified not to have lost his facil-

ity. "But my ear is getting slower," I said. "For instance, I eavesdropped a while ago when you were talking about your Huron soldiers, and I got most of what you said because you spoke English. I doubt if I could if you'd been speaking French."

The colonel shrugged massive shoulders. "My English is defective but distinct," he explained. "One is forced to speak slowly when one speaks badly. Also the Colonel Chichely" — the Britisher—"it is he at whom I talk carefully. The English ear, it is not imaginative. One must make things clear. You know the Hurons, then?"

I specified how.

"Ah!" he breathed out. "The men in my command had been, some of them, what you call guides. They got across to France in charge of troop horses on the ships; then they stayed and enlisted. Fine soldier stuff. Hardy, and of resource and of finesse. Quick and fearless as wildcats. They fit into one niche of the war better than any other material. You heard the story of my rescue?"

I had not. At that point food had interfered, and I asked if it was too much that the colonel should repeat.

"By no means," agreed the polite colonel, ready, moreover, I guessed, for any amount of talk in his native tongue. He launched an epic episode. "I was hit leading, in a charge, two battalions. I need not have done that," another shrug—"but what will you? It was snowing; it was going to be bad work; one could perhaps put courage into the men by being at their head. It is often the duty of an officer to do more than his duty—*n'est-ce-pas?* So that I was hit in the right knee and the left shoulder *par exemple,* and fell about six yards from the German trenches. A place unhealthy, and one sees I could not run away, being shot on the bias. I shammed dead. An alive French officer would have been too interesting in that scenery. I assure m'sieur that the *entr'actes* are far too long in No Man's Land. I became more and more displeased with the management of that play as I lay, very badly amused with my wounds, and afraid to blink an eye, being a corpse.

The Huns demand a high state of immobility in corpses. But I fell happily sidewise, and out of the extreme corner of the left eye I caught a glimpse of our sand-bags. One blessed that twist, though it became enough *ennuyant*, and one would have given a year of good life to turn over. Merely to turn over. Am I fatiguing m'sieur?" the colonel broke in.

I prodded him back eagerly into his tale.

"M'sieur is amiable. The long and short of it is that when it became dark my good lads began to try to rescue my body. Four or five times that one-twentieth of eye saw a wriggling form work through sand-bags and start slowly, flat to the earth, toward me. But the ground was snow-covered and the Germans saw too the dark uniform. Each time a fusillade of shots broke out, and the moving figure dropped hastily behind the sand-bags. And each time—" the colonel stopped to light a cigarette, his face ruddy in the glare of the match. "Each time I was—disappointed. I became disgusted with the management of that theatre, till at last the affair seemed beyond hope,

and I had about determined to turn over and draw up my bad leg with my good hand for a bit of easement and be shot comfortably, when I was aware that the surface of the ground near by was heaving — the white, snowy ground heaving. I was close enough to madness between cold and pain, and I regarded the phenomenon as a dream. But with that hands came out of the heaving ground, eyes gleamed. A rope was lashed about my middle and I was drawn toward our trenches." The cigarette puffed vigorously at this point. "M'sieur sees?"

I did not.

The colonel laughed. "One of my Hurons had the inspiration to run to a farmhouse not far away and requisition a sheet. He wrapped himself in it, head and all, and, being Indian, it was a bagatelle to him to crawl out on his stomach. They were pleased enough, my good fellows, when they found they had got not only my body but also me in it."

"I can imagine, knowing Hurons, how that Huron enjoyed his success," I said. "It's in their

blood to be swift and silent and adventurous. But they're superstitious; they're afraid of anything supernatural." I hesitated, with a laugh in my mind at a memory. "It's not fitting that I should swap stories with a hero of the Great War, yet—I believe you might be amused with an adventure of one of my guides." The Frenchman, all civil interest, disclaimed his heroism with hands and shoulders, but smiling too—for he had small chance at disclaiming with those two crosses on his breast.

"I shall be enchanted to hear m'sieur's tale of his guide. For the rest I am myself quite mad over the 'sport.' I love to insanity the out of doors and shooting and fishing. It is a regret that the service has given me no opportunity these four years for a breathing spell in the woods. M'sieur will tell me the tale of his guide's superstition?"

A scheme began to form in my brain at that instant too delightful, it seemed, to come true. I put it aside and went on with my story. "I have one guide, a Huron half-breed," I said, "whom I

particularly like. He's an old fellow—sixty—but light and quick and powerful as a boy. More interesting than a boy, because he's full of experiences. Two years ago a bear swam across the lake where my camp is, and I went out in a canoe with this Rafael and got him."

Colonel Raffré made of this fact an event larger than—I am sure—he would have made of his winning of the war cross.

"You shame me, colonel," I said, and went on hurriedly. "Rafael, the guide, was pleased about the bear. "When gentlemens kill t'ings, guides is more happy," he explained to me, and he proceeded to tell an anecdote. He prefaced it by informing me that one time he hunt bear and he see devil. He had been hunting, it seemed, two or three winters before with his brother-in-law at the headwaters of the St. Maurice River, up north there," I elucidated, pointing through the window toward the "long white street of Beauport," across the St. Lawrence. "It's very lonely country, entirely wild, Indian hunting-ground yet. These two Hurons, Rafael and his brother-in-law, were on a

two months' trip to hunt and trap, having their meagre belongings and provisions on sleds which they dragged across the snow. They depended for food mostly on what they could trap or shoot —moose, caribou, beaver, and small animals. But they had bad luck. They set many traps but caught nothing, and they saw no game to shoot. So that in a month they were hard pressed. One cold day they went two miles to visit a beaver trap, where they had seen signs. They hoped to find an animal caught and to feast on beaver tail, which is good eating."

Here I had to stop and explain much about beaver tails, and the rest of beavers, to the Frenchman, who was interested like a boy in this new, almost unheard-of beast. At length:

"Rafael and his brother-in-law were disappointed. A beaver had been close and eaten the bark off a birch stick which the men had left, but nothing was in the trap. They turned and began a weary walk through the desolate country back to their little tent. Small comfort waited for them there, as their provisions were low, only flour and

bacon left. And they dared not expend much of that. They were down-hearted, and to add to it a snow-storm came on and they lost their way. Almost a hopeless situation—an uninhabited country, winter, snow, hunger. And they were lost. '*Egaré. Perdu,*' Rafael said. But the Huron was far from giving up. He peered through the falling snow, not thick yet, and spied a mountain across a valley. He knew that mountain. He had worked near it for two years, logging—the '*chantier,*' they call it. He knew there was a good camp on a river near the mountain, and he knew there would be a stove in the camp and, as Rafael said, 'Mebbe we haf a luck and somebody done gone and lef' somet'ing to eat.' Rafael prefers to talk English to me. He told me all this in broken English.

"It was three miles to the hypothetical camp, but the two tired, hungry men in their rather wretched clothes started hopefully. And after a hard tramp through unbroken forest they came in sight of a log shanty and their spirits rose. 'Pretty tired work,' Rafael said it was. When

they got close to the shanty they heard a noise inside. They halted and looked at each other. Rafael knew there were no loggers in these parts now, and you'll remember it was absolutely wild country. Then something came to the window and looked out."

"*Something?*" repeated the Frenchman in italics. His eyes were wide and he was as intent on Rafael's story as heart could desire.

"They couldn't tell what it was," I went on. "A formless apparition, not exactly white or black, and huge and unknown of likeness. The Indians were frightened by a manner of unearthliness about the thing, and the brother-in-law fell on his knees and began to pray. 'It is the devil,' he murmured to Rafael. 'He will eat us, or carry us to hell.' And he prayed more.

"But old Rafael, scared to death, too, because the thing seemed not to be of this world, yet had his courage with him. 'Mebbe it devil,' he said—such was his report to me—'anyhow I'm cold and hungry, me. I want dat camp. I go shoot dat devil.'

"He crept up to the camp alone, the brother still praying in the bush. Rafael was rather convinced, mind you, that he was going to face the powers of darkness, but he had his rifle loaded and was ready for business. The door was open and he stepped inside. Something—'great beeg somet'ing' he put it—rose up and came at him, and he fired. And down fell the devil."

"In the name of a sacred pig, what was it?" demanded my Frenchman.

"That was what I asked. It was a bear. The men who had been logging in the camp two months back had left a keg of maple-syrup and a half barrel of flour, and the bear broke into both—successively—and alternately. He probably thought he was in bear-heaven for a while, but it must have gotten irksome. For his head was eighteen inches wide when they found him, white, with black touches. They soaked him in the river two days, and sold his skin for twenty dollars. 'Pretty good for devil skin,' Rafael said."

The Frenchman stared at me a moment and then leaned back in his chair and shouted laughter.

The greedy bear's finish had hit his funny-bone. And the three others stopped talking and demanded the story told over, which I did, condensing.

"I like zat Hurong for my soldier," Colonel Raffré stated heartily. "Ze man what are not afraid of man *or* of devil—zat is ze man to fight ze Boches." He was talking English now because Colonel Chichely was listening. He went on. "Zere is human devils—oh, but plentee—what we fight in France. I haf not heard of ozzers. But I believe well ze man who pull me out in sheet would be as your guide Rafael—he also would crip up wiz his rifle on real devil out of hell. But yes. I haf not told you how my Indian soldier bring in prisoners—no?"

We all agreed no, and put in a request.

"He brings zem in not one by one always—not always." The colonel grinned. He went on to tell this tale, which I shift into the vernacular from his laborious English.

It appears that he had discerned the aptitude of his Hurons for reconnaissance work. If he needed information out of the dangerous country

lying in front, if he needed a prisoner to question, these men were eager to go and get either, get anything. The more hazardous the job the better, and for a long time they came out of it untouched. In the group one man—nicknamed by the poilus, his comrades — Hirondelle — the Swallow — supposedly because of his lightness and swiftness, was easily chief. He had a fault, however, his dislike to bring in prisoners alive. Four times he had haled a German corpse before the colonel, seeming not rightly to understand that a dead enemy was useless for information.

"The Boches are good killing," he had elucidated to his officer. And finally: "It is well, m'sieur, the colonel. One failed to understand that the colonel prefers a live Boche to a dead one. Me, I am otherwise. It appears a pity to let live such vermin. Has the colonel, by chance, heard the things these savages did in Belgium? Yes? But then— Yet I will bring to m'sieur, the colonel, all there is to be desired of German prisoners alive—*en vie;* fat ones; *en masse.*"

That night Hirondelle was sent out with four

of his fellow Hurons to get, if possible, a prisoner. Pretty soon he was separated from the others; all but himself returning empty-handed in a couple of hours. No Germans seemed to be abroad. But Hirondelle did not return.

"He risks too far," grumbled his captain. "He has been captured at last. I always knew they would get him, one night."

But that was not the night. At one o'clock there was suddenly a sound of lamentation in the front trench of the French on that sector. The soldiers who were sleeping crawled out of their holes in the sides of the trench walls, and crowded around the zigzag, narrow way and rubbed their eyes and listened to the laughter of officers and soldiers on duty. There was Hirondelle, solemn as a church, yet with a dancing light in his eyes. There, around him, crowded as sheep to a shepherd, twenty figures in German uniform stood with hands up and wet tears running down pasty cheeks. And they were fat, it was noticeable that all of them were bulging of figure beyond even the German average. They wailed "Kamerad! Gut

Kamerad!" in a chorus that was sickening to the plucky poilu make-up. Hirondelle, interrogated of many, kept his lips shut till the first excitement quieted. Then: "I report to my colonel," he stated, and finally he and his twenty were led back to the winding trench and the colonel was waked to receive them. This was what had happened: Hirondelle had wandered about, mostly on his stomach, through the darkness and peril of No Man's Land, enjoying himself heartily; when suddenly he missed his companions and realized that he had had no sign of them for some time. That did not trouble him. He explained to the colonel that he felt "more free." Also that if he pulled off a success he would have "more glory." After two hours of this midnight amusement, in deadly danger every second, Hirondelle heard steps. He froze to the earth, as he had learned from wild things in North American forests. The steps came nearer. A star-shell away down the line lighted the scene so that Hirondelle, motionless on the ground, all keen eyes, saw two Germans coming toward him. In-

stantly he had a scheme. In a subdued growl, yet distinctly, he threw over his shoulder an order that eight men should go to the right and eight to the left. Then, on his feet, he sent into the darkness a stern "Halt!" Instantly there was a sputter, arms thrown up, the inevitable "Kamerad!" and Hirondelle ordered the first German to pass him, then a second. Out of the darkness emerged a third. Hirondelle waved him on, and with that there was a fourth. And a fifth. Behold a sixth. About then Hirondelle judged it wise to give more orders to his imaginary squad of sixteen. But such a panic had seized this German mob; that little acting was necessary. Dark figure followed dark figure out of the darker night—arms up. They whimpered as they came, and on and on they came out of shadows. Hirondelle stated that he began to think the Crown Prince's army was surrendering to him. At last, when the procession stopped, he—and his mythical sixteen—marched the entire covey, without any objection from them, only abject obedience, to the French trenches.

The colonel, with this whining crowd weeping about him, with Hirondelle's erect figure confronting him, his black eyes regarding the cowards with scorn as he made his report—the colonel simply could not understand the situation. All these men! "What are you—soldiers?" he flung at the wretched group. And one answered. "No, my officer. We are not soldiers, we are the cooks." At that there was a wail. "Ach! Who, then, will the breakfast cook for my general? He will *schrecklich* angry be for his sausage and his sauerkraut."

By degrees the colonel got the story. A number of cooks had combined to protest against new regulations, and the general, to punish this astounding insubordination, had sent them out unarmed, petrified with terror, into No Man's Land for an hour. They had there encountered Hirondelle. Hirondelle drew the attention of the colonel to the fact that he had promised prisoners, fat ones. "Will my colonel regard the shape of these pigs," suggested Hirondelle. "And also that they are twenty in number. Enough *en*

masse for one man to take, is it not, my colonel?"

The little dinner-party at the Frontenac discussed this episode. "Almost too good to be true, colonel," I objected. "You're sure it *is* true? Bring out your Hirondelle. He ought to be home wounded, with a war cross on his breast, by now."

The colonel smiled and shook his head. "It is that which I cannot do—show you my Hirondelle. Not here, and not in France, by *malheur*. For he ventured once too often and too far, as the captain prophesied, and he is dead. God rest the brave! Also a Croix de Guerre is indeed his, but no Hirondelle is there to claim it."

The silence of a moment was a salute to the soul of a warrior passed to the happy hunting-grounds. And then I began on another story of my Rafael's adventures which something in the colonel's tale suggested.

The colonel, his winning face all a smile, interrupted. "Does one believe, then, in this Rafael of m'sieur who caps me each time my tales of my Huron Hirondelle? It appears to me that m'sieur

has the brain of a story-teller and hangs good stories on a figure which he has built and named so—Rafael. Me, I cannot believe there exists this Rafael. I believe there is only one such gallant d'Artagnan of the Hurons, and it is—it was —my Hirondelle. Show me your Rafael, then!" demanded the colonel.

At that challenge the scheme which had flashed into my mind an hour ago gathered shape and power. "I will show him to you, colonel," I took up the challenge, "if you will allow me." I turned to include the others. "Isn't it possible for you all to call a truce and come up tomorrow to my club to be my guests for as long or as short a time as you will? I can't say how much pleasure it would give me, and I believe I could give you something also—great fishing, shooting, a moose, likely, or at least a caribou—and Rafael. I promise Rafael. It's not unlikely, colonel, that he may have known the Hirondelle. The Hurons are few. Do come," I threw at them.

They took it after their kind. The Englishman stared and murmured: "Awfully kind, I'm sure,

but quite impossible." The Canadian, our next of kin, smiled, shaking his head like a brother. Fitzhugh put his arm of brawn about me again till that glorious star gleamed almost on my own shoulder, and patted me lovingly as he said: "Old son, I'd give my eyes to go, if I wasn't up to my ears in job."

But the Frenchman's face shone, and he lifted a finger that was a sentence. It embodied reflection and eagerness and suspense. The rest of us gazed at that finger as if it were about to address us. And the colonel spoke. "I t'ink," brought out the colonel emphatically, "I t'ink I damn go."

And I snatched the finger and the hand of steel to which it grew, and wrung both. This was a delightful Frenchman. "Good!" I cried out. "Glorious! I want you all, but I'm mightily pleased to get one. Colonel, you're a sport."

"But, yes," agreed the colonel happily, "I am sport. Why not? I haf four days to wait till my sheep sail. Why not kip—how you say?—kip in my hand for shooting—go kill moose? I may

talk immensely of zat moose in France—hein? Much more *chic* as to kill Germans, *n' est ce pas?* Everybody kill Germans."

At one o'clock next day the out-of-breath little train which had gasped up mountains for five hours from Quebec uttered a relieved shriek and stopped at a doll-house club station sitting by itself in the wilderness. Four or five men in worn but clean clothes—they always start clean—waited on the platform, and there was a rapid fire of "*Bon jour*, m'sieur," as we alighted. Then ten quick eyes took in my colonel in his horizon-blue uniform. I was aware of a throb of interest. At once there was a scurry for luggage because the train must be held till it was off, and the guides ran forward to the baggage-car to help. I bundled the colonel down a sharp, short hill to the river, while smiling, observant Hurons, missing not a line of braid or a glitter of button, passed with bags and *pacquetons* as we descended. The blue and black and gold was loaded into a canoe with an Indian at bow and stern for the three-mile paddle to the club-house. He was al-

ready a schoolboy on a holiday with unashamed enthusiasm.

"But it is fun—fun, zis," he shouted to me from his canoe. "And *lequel*, m'sieur, which is Rafael?"

Rafael, in the bow of my boat, missed a beat of his paddle. It seemed to me he looked older than two years back, when I last saw him. His shoulders were bent, and his merry and stately personality was less in evidence. He appeared subdued. He did not turn with a smile or a grave glance of inquiry at the question, as I had expected. I nodded toward him.

"*Mais oui*," cried out the colonel. "One has heard of you, *mon ami*. One will talk to you later of shooting."

Rafael, not lifting his head, answered quietly, "*C'est bien, m'sieur.*"

Just then the canoes slipped past a sandy bar decorated with a fresh moose track; the excitement of the colonel set us laughing. This man was certainly a joy! And with that, after a long paddle down the winding river and across two breezy lakes, we were at the club-house. We

lunched, and in short order—for we wanted to make camp that night—I dug into my *pacquetons* and transformed my officer into a sportsman, his huge delight in Abernethy & Flitch's creations being a part of the game. Then we were off.

One has small chance for associating with guides while travelling in the woods. One sits in a canoe between two, but if there is a wind and the boat is *chargé* their hands are full with the small craft and its heavy load; when the landing is made and the "messieurs" are *débarqués*, instantly the men are busy lifting canoes on their heads and packs on their backs in bizarre, piled-up masses to be carried from a leather tump-line, a strap of two inches wide going around the forehead. The whole length of the spine helps in the carrying. My colonel watched Delphise, a husky specimen, load. With a grunt he swung up a canvas U. S. mailbag stuffed with *butin*, which includes clothes and books and shoes and tobacco and cartridges and more. With a half-syllable Delphise indicated to Laurent a bag of potatoes weighing eighty pounds, a box of tinned biscuit,

a wooden package of cans of condensed milk, a rod case, and a raincoat. These Laurent added to the spine of Delphise.

"How many pounds?" I asked, as the dark head bent forward to equalize the strain.

Delphise shifted weight with another grunt to gauge the pull. "About a hundred and eighty pounds, m'sieur—quite heavy—*assez pesant.*" Off he trotted uphill, head bent forward.

The colonel was entranced. "Hardy fellows—the making of fine soldiers," he commented, tossing his cigarette away to stare.

That night after dinner—but it was called supper—the colonel and I went into the big, airy log kitchen with the lake looking in at three windows and the forest at two doors. We gunned over with the men plans for the next day, for the most must be made of every minute of this precious military holiday. I explained how precious it was, and then I spoke a few words about the honor of having as our guest a soldier who had come from the front, and who was going back to the front. For the life of me I could not resist

a sentence more about the two crosses they had seen on his uniform that day. The Cross of War, the Legion of Honor! I could not let my men miss that! Rafael had been quiet and colorless, and I was disappointed in the show qualities of my show guide. But the colonel beamed with satisfaction, in everything and everybody, and received my small introduction with a bow and a flourish worthy of Carnegie Hall.

"I am happy to be in this so charming camp, in this forest magnificent, on these ancient mountains," orated the colonel floridly. "I am most pleased of all to have Huron Indians as my guides, because between Hurons and me there are memories." The men were listening spell-bound. "But yes. I had Huron soldiers serving in my regiment, just now at the western front, of whom I thought highly. They were all that there is, those Hurons of mine, of most fearless, most skilful. One among them was pre-eminent. Some of you may have known him. I regret to say that I never knew his real name, but among his comrades he went by the name of l'Hirondelle. From that

name one guesses his qualities—swift as a swallow, untamable, gay, brave to foolishness, moving in dashes not to be followed—such was my Hirondelle. And yet this swift bird was in the end shot down."

At this point in the colonel's speech I happened to look at Rafael, back in the shadows of the half-lighted big room. His eyes glittered out of the dimness like disks of fire, his face was strained, and his figure bent forward. "He must have known this chap, the Swallow," I thought to myself. "Just possibly a son or brother or nephew of his. The colonel was going on, telling in fluent, beautiful French the story of how Hirondelle, wrapped in a sheet, had rescued him. The men drank it in. "When those guides are old, old fellows, they'll talk about this night and the colonel's speech to their great-grandchildren," I considered, and again the colonel went on.

"Have I m'sieur's permission to *raconter* a short story of the most amusing which was the last escapade of my Hirondelle before he was killed?"

M'sieur gave permission eagerly, and the low murmur of the voices of the hypnotized guides, standing in a group before the colonel, added to its force and set him smiling.

"It was like this," he stated. "My Hirondelle was out in No Man's Land of a night, strictly charged to behave in a manner *comme il faut*, for he was of a rashness, and we did not wish to lose him. He was valuable to us, and beyond that the regiment had an affection for him. For such reasons his captain tried—but, yes—to keep him within bounds. As I say, on this night he had received particular orders to be *sage*. So that the first thing the fellow does is to lose his comrades, for which he had a *penchant*, one knows. After that he crawls over that accursed country, in and out of shellholes, rifle in his teeth likely—the good God knows where else, for one need be all hands and feet for such crawling. He crawled in that fashion till at last he lost himself. And then he was concerned to find out where might be our lines till in time he heard a sound of snoring and was well content. Home at last. He tumbled

into a dark trench, remarking only that it was filled with men since he left, and so tired he was with his adventure that he pushed away the man next, who was at the end, to gain space, and he rolled over to sleep. But that troublesome man next took too much room. Our Hirondelle planted him a kick in the middle of the back. At which the man half waked and swore at him—in German. And dropped off to sleep again with his leg of a pig slung across Hirondelle's chest. At that second a star-shell lighted up the affair, and Hirondelle, staring with much interest, believe me, saw a trench filled with sleeping Boches. To get out of that as quietly as might be was the game—*n'est-ce pas, mes amis?* But not for Hirondelle.

"'My colonel has a liking for prisoners,' he reported later. 'My captain's orders were to conduct oneself *très comme il faut.* It is always *comme il faut* to please the colonel. Therefore it seemed *en regle* to take a prisoner. I took him. *Le v'la.*'

"What the fellow did was to wait till the Boche next door was well asleep, then slowly remove his

rifle, then fasten on his throat with a grip which Hirondelle understood, and finally to overpower the Boche till he was ready enough to crawl out at the muzzle of Hirondelle's rifle."

There was a stir in the little group of guides, and from the shadows Rafael's voice spoke.

"Mon colonel—pardon!"

The colonel turned sharply. "Who is that?"

"There were two Germans," spoke the voice out of the shadows.

The colonel, too astonished to answer, stared. The voice, trembling, old, went on. "The second man waked and one was obliged to strangle him also. One brought the brace to the captain at the end of the carabine—rifle."

"In heaven's name who are you?" demanded the colonel.

From where old Rafael had been, bowed and limp in his humble, worn clothes, stepped at a stride a soldier, head up, shoulders squared, glittering eyes forward, and stood at attention. It was like magic. One hand snapped up in a smart salute.

"Who are you?" whispered the colonel.

"If the colonel pleases—l'Hirondelle."

I heard the colonel's breath come and go as he peered, leaning forward to the soldierly figure. "*Nom de Ciel,*" he murmured, "I believe it is." Then in sharp sentences: "You were reported killed. Are you a deserter?"

The steady image of a soldier dropped back a step.

"My colonel—no."

"Explain this."

Rafael—l'Hirondelle—explained. He had not been killed, but captured and sent to a German prison-camp.

"You escaped?" the colonel threw in.

"But yes, my colonel."

The colonel laughed. "One would know it. The clumsy Boches could not hold the Swallow."

"But no, my colonel."

"Go on."

"One went to work before light, my colonel, in that accursed prison-camp. One was out of sight from the guard for a moment, turning a corner, so

that on a morning I slipped into some bushes and hid in a dugout—for it was an old camp—all day. That night I walked. I walked for seven nights and lay hid for seven days, eating, my colonel, very little. Then, *v'la*, I was in front of the French lines."

"You ran across to our lines?"

"But not exactly. One sees that I was yet in dirty German prison clothes, and looked like an infantryman of the Boches, so that a poilu rushed at me with a bayonet. I believed, then, that I had come upon a German patrol. Each thought the other a Hun. I managed to wrest from the poilu his rifle with the bayonet, but as we fought another shot me—in the side."

"You were wounded?"

"Yes, my colonel."

"In hospital?"

"Yes, my colonel."

"How long?"

"Three months, my colonel."

"Why are you not again in the army?"

The face of the erect soldier, Hirondelle, the

dare-devil, was suddenly the face of a man grown old, ill, and broken-hearted. He stared at the stalwart French officer, gathering himself with an effort. "I — was discharged, my colonel, as — unfit." His head in its old felt hat dropped into his hands suddenly, and he broke beyond control into sobs that shook not only him but every man there.

The colonel stepped forward and put an arm around the bent shoulders. "*Mon héros!*" said the colonel.

With that Rafael found words, never a hard task for him. Yet they came with gasps between. "To be cast out as an old horse—at the moment of glory! I had dreamed all my life—of fighting. And I had it—oh, my colonel—I had it! The glory came when I was old and knew how to be happy in it. Not as a boy who laughs and takes all as his right. I was old, yes, but I was good to kill the vermin. I avenged the children and the women whom those savages— My people, the savages of the wood, knew no better, yet they have not done things as bad as these vile ones who

were educated, who knew. Therefore I killed them. I was old, but I was strong, my colonel knows. Not for nothing have I lived a hard life. *On a vu de la misère.* I have hunted moose and bear and kept my muscles of steel and my eyes of a hawk. It is in my blood to be a fighting man. I fought with pleasure, and I was troubled with no fear. I was old, but I could have killed many devils more. And so I was shot down by my own friend after seven days of hard life. And the young soldier doctor discharged me as unfit to fight. And so I am come home very fast to hide myself, for I am ashamed. I am finished. The fighting and the glory are for me no more."

The colonel stepped back a bit and his face flamed. "Glory!" he whispered. "Glory no more for the Hirondelle? What of the Croix de Guerre?"

Rafael shook his head. "I haf heard my colonel who said they would have given me—me, the Hirondelle—the war cross. That now is lost too."

"Lost!" The colonel's deep tone was full of

the vibration which only a French voice carries. With a quick movement he unfastened the catch that held the green ribbon, red-striped, of his own cross of war. He turned and pinned the thing which men die for on the shabby coat of the guide. Then he kissed him on either cheek. "My comrade," he said, "your glory will never be old."

There was deep silence in the camp kitchen. The crackling of wood that fell apart, the splashing of the waves of the lake on the pebbles by the shore were the only sounds on earth. For a long minute the men stood as if rooted; the colonel, poised and dramatic, and, I stirred to the depths of my soul by this great ceremony which had come out of the skies to its humble setting in the forest—the men and the colonel and I, we all watched Rafael.

And Rafael slowly, yet with the iron tenacity of his race, got back his control. "My colonel," he began, and then failed. The Swallow did not dare trust his broken wings. It could not be done—to speak his thanks. He looked up with

black eyes shining through tears which spoke everything.

"Tomorrow," he stated brokenly, "if we haf a luck, my colonel and I go kill a moose."

They had a luck.

ONLY ONE OF THEM

ONLY ONE OF THEM

IT was noon on a Saturday. Out of the many buildings of the great electrical manufacturing plant at Schenectady poured employees by hundreds. Thirty trolley-cars were run on special tracks to the place and stood ready to receive the sea streaming towards them. Massed motor-cars waited beyond the trolleys for their owners, officials of the works. The girl in blue serge, standing at a special door of a special building counted, keeping watch meantime of the crowd, the cars. A hundred and twenty-five she made it; it came to her mind that State Street in Albany on a day of some giant parade was not unlike this, not less a throng. The girl, who was secretary to an assistant manager, was used to the sight, but it was an impressive sight and she was impressionable and found each Saturday's pageant a wonder. The pageant was more interesting it may be be-

cause it focussed always on one figure—and here he was.

"Did you wait long?" he asked as he came up, broad-shouldered and athletic of build, boyish and honest of face, as good looking a young American as one may see in any crowd.

"I was early." She smiled up at him as they swung off towards the trolleys; her eyes flashed a glance which said frankly that she found him satisfactory to look upon.

They sped past others, many others, and made a trolley car and a seat together, which was the goal. They always made it, every Saturday, yet it was always a game. Exhilarated by the winning of the game they settled into the seat for the three-quarters of an hour run; it was quite a worth-while world, the smiling glances said one to the other.

The girl gazed, not seeing them particularly, at the slower people filling the seats and the passage of the car. Then: "Oh," she spoke, "what was it you were going to tell me?"

The man's face grew sober, a bit troubled.

"Well," he said, "I've decided. I'm going to enlist."

She was still for a second. Then: "I think that's splendid," she brought out. "Splendid. Of course, I knew you'd do it. It's the only thing that could be. I'm glad."

"Yes," the man spoke slowly. "It's the only thing that could be. There's nothing to keep me. My mother's dead. My father's husky and not old and my sisters are with him. There's nobody to suffer by my going."

"N-no," the girl agreed. "But—it's the fine thing to do just the same. You're thirty-two you see, and couldn't be drafted. That makes it rather great of you to go."

"Well," the man answered, "not so very great, I suppose, as it's what all young Americans are doing. I rather think it's one of those things, like spelling, which are no particular credit if you do them, but a disgrace if you don't."

"What a gray way of looking at it!" the girl objected. "As if all the country wasn't glorying in the boys who go! As if we didn't all stand

back of you and crowd the side lines to watch you, bursting with pride. You know we all love you."

"Do you love me, Mary? Enough to marry me before I go?" His voice was low, but the girl missed no syllable. She had heard those words or some like them in his voice before.

"Oh, Jim," she begged, "don't ask me now. I'm not certain—yet. I—I couldn't get along very well without you. I care a lot. But—I'm not just sure it's—the way I ought to care to marry you."

As alone in the packed car as in a wood, the little drama went on and no one noticed. "I'm sorry, Mary." The tone was dispirited. "I could go with a lot lighter heart if we belonged to each other."

"Don't say that, Jim," she pleaded. "You make me out—a slacker. You don't want me to marry you as a duty?"

"Good Lord, no!"

"I know that. And I—do care. There's nobody like you. I admire you so for going—but you're not afraid of anything. It's easy for you,

that part. I suppose a good many are really—afraid. Of the guns and the horror—all that. You're lucky, Jim. You don't give that a thought."

The man flashed an odd look, and then regarded his hands joined on his knee.

"I do appreciate your courage. I admire that a lot. But somehow Jim there's a doubt that holds me back. I can't be sure I — love you enough; that it's the right way—for that."

The man sighed. "Yes," he said. "I see. Maybe some time. Heavens knows I wouldn't want you unless it was whole-hearted. I wouldn't risk your regretting it, not if I wanted you ten times more. Which is impossible." He put out his big hand with a swift touch on hers. "Maybe some time. Don't worry," he said. "I'm yours." And went on in a commonplace tone. "I think I'll show up at the recruiting office this afternoon, and I'll come to your house in the evening as usual. Is that all right?"

The car sped into Albany and the man went to her door with the girl and left her with few

words more and those about commonplace subjects. As he swung down the street he went over the episode in his mind, and dissected it and dwelt on words and phrases and glances, and drew conclusions as lovers have done before, each detail, each conclusion mightily important, outweighing weeks of conversation of the rest of the world together. At last he shook his head and set his lips.

"It's not honest." He formed the words with his lips now, a summing up of many thoughts in his brain. The brain went on elaborating the text. "She thinks I'm brave; she thinks it's easy for me to face enlisting, and the rest. She thinks I'm the makeup which can meet horror and suffering light-heartedly. And I'm not. She admires me for that—she said so. I'm not it. I'm fooling her; it's not honest. Yet"—he groaned aloud. "Yet I may lose her if I tell her the truth. I'm afraid. I am. I hate it. I can't bear—I can't bear to leave my job and my future, just when it's opening out. But I could do that. Only I'm—Oh, damnation—I'm afraid. Horror and danger,

agony of men and horses, myself wounded maybe, out on No Man's Land—left there—hours. To die like a dog. Oh, my God—must I? If I tell it will break the little hold I have on her. Must I go to this devil's dance that I hate—and give up her love besides? But yet—it isn't honest to fool her. Oh, God, what will I do?" People walking up State Street, meeting a sober-faced young man, glanced at him with no particular interest. A woman waiting on a doorstep regarded him idly.

"Why isn't he in uniform?" she wondered as one does wonder in these days at a strong chap in mufti. Then she rebuked her thought. "Undoubtedly there's a good reason; American boys are not slackers."

His slow steps carried him beyond her vision and casual thought. The people in the street and the woman on the doorstep did not think or care that what they saw was a man fighting his way through the crisis of his life, fighting alone "per aspera ad astra—" through thorns to the stars.

He lunched with a man at a club and after that took his way to the building on Broadway where were the recruiting headquarters. He had told her that he was going to enlist. As he walked he stared at the people in the streets as a man might stare going to his execution. These people went about their affairs, he considered, as if he—who was about to die—did not, in passing their friendly commonplace, salute them. He did salute them. Out of his troubled soul he sent a silent greeting to each ordinary American hurrying along, each standing to him for pleasant and peaceful America, America of all his days up to now. Was he to toss away this comfortable comradeship, his life to be, everything he cared for on earth, to go into hell, and likely never come back? Why? Why must he? There seemed to be plenty who wanted to fight—why not let them? It was the old slacker's argument; the man was ashamed as he caught himself using it; he had the grace to see its selfishness and cowardice. Yet his soul was in revolt as he drove his body to the recruiting office, and the thoughts that filled him

were not of the joy of giving but of the pain of giving up. With that he stood on the steps of the building and here was Charlie Thurston hurrying by on the sidewalk.

"Hello, Jim! Going in to enlist? So long till you come back with one leg and an eye out."

It was Thurston's idea of a joke. He would have been startled if he had known into what a trembling balance his sledge-hammer wit cast its unlucky weight. The balance quivered at the blow, shook back and forth an instant and fell heavily. Jim Barlow wheeled, sprang down the stone steps and bolted up the street, panting as one who has escaped a wild beast. Thurston had said it. That was what was due to happen. It was now three o'clock; Barlow fled up State Street to the big hotel and took a room and locked his door and threw himself on the bed. What was he to do? After weeks of hesitation he had come to the decision that he would offer himself to his country. He saw — none plainer — the reasons why it was fit and right so to do. Other men were giving up homes and careers and the whole bright

and easy side of life—why not he? It was the greatest cause to fight for in the world's history—should he not fight for it? How, after the war, might he meet friends, his own people, his children to come, if he alone of his sort had no honorable record to show? Such arguments, known to all, he repeated, even aloud he repeated them, tossing miserably about the bed in his hotel room. And his mind at once accepted them, but that was all. His spirit failed to spring to his mind's support with the throb of emotion which is the spark that makes the engine go. The wheels went around over and over but the connection was not made. The human mind is useful machinery, but it is only the machine's master, the soul, which can use it. Over and over he got to his feet and spoke aloud: "Now I will go." Over and over a repulsion seized him so strongly that his knees gave way and he fell back on the bed. If he had a mother, he thought, she might have helped, but there was no one. Mary—but he could not risk Mary's belief in his courage. Only a mother would have understood entirely.

With that, sick at heart, the hideous sea of counter arguments, arguments of a slacker, surged upon him. What would it all matter a hundred years from now? Wasn't he more useful in his place keeping up the industries of the nation? Wasn't he a bigger asset to America as an alive engineer, an expert in his work, than as mere cannon fodder, one of thousands to be shot into junk in a morning's "activity"—just one of them? Because the Germans were devils why should he let them reach over here, away over here, and drag him out of a decent and happy life and throw him like dirt into the horrible mess they had made, and leave him dead or worse—mangled and useless. Then, again—there were plenty of men mad to fight; why not let them? Through a long afternoon he fought with the beasts, and dinner-time came and he did not notice, and at last he rose and, telephoning first to Mary a terse message that he would not be able to come this evening, he went out, hardly knowing what he did, and wandered up town.

There was a humble church in a quiet street

where a service flag hung, thick with dark stars, and the congregation were passing out from a special service for its boys who were going off to camp. The boys were there on the steps, surrounded by people eager to touch their hands, a little group of eight or ten with serious bright faces, and a look in their eyes which stabbed into Barlow. One may see that look any day in any town, meeting the erect stalwart lads in khaki who are about our streets. It is the look of those who have made a vital sacrifice and know the price, and whose minds are at peace. Barlow, lingering on the corner across the way, stared hungrily. How had they got that look, that peace? If only he might talk to one of them! Yet he knew how dumb an animal is a boy, and how helpless these would be to give him the master word.

The master-word, he needed that; he needed it desperately. He must go; he must. Life would be unendurable without self-respect; no amount of explaining could cover the stain on his soul if he failed in the answer to the call of honor. That

was it, it was in a nut-shell, the call. Yet he could not hear it as his call. He wandered unhappily away and left the church and its dissolving congregation, and the boys, the pride of the church, the boys who were now, they also, separating and going back each to his home for the last evening perhaps, to be loved and made much of. Barlow vaguely pictured the scenes in those little homes—eyes bright with unshed tears, love and laughter and courage, patriotism as fine as in any great house in America, determination that in giving to America what was dearest it should be given with high spirit—that the boys should have smiling faces to remember, over there. And then again—love and tender words. He was missing all that. He, too, might go back to his father's house an enlisted man, and meet his father's eyes of pride and see his sisters gaze at him with a new respect, feel their new honor of him in the touch of arms about his neck. All these things were for him too, if he would but take them. With that there was the sound of singing, shrill, fresh voices singing down the street. He wheeled about. A

company of little girls were marching towards him and he smiled, looking at them, thinking the sight as pretty as a garden of flowers. They were from eight to ten or eleven years old and in the bravery of fresh white dresses; each had a big butterfly of pink or blue or yellow or white ribbon perched on each little fair or dark head, and each carried over her shoulder a flag. Quite evidently they were coming from the celebration at the church, where in some capacity they had figured. Not millionaires children these; the little sisters likely of the boys who were going to be soldiers; just dear things that bloom all over America, the flowering of the land, common to rich and poor. As they sprang along two by two, in unmartial ranks, they sang with all their might "The Long, Long Trail."

"There's a long, long trail that's leading
To No Man's Land in France
Where the shrapnel shells are bursting
And we must advance."

* * * * * * *

And then:

We're going to show old Kaiser Bill
What our Yankee boys can do.

Jim Barlow, his hands in his pockets, backed up against a house and listened to the clear, high, little voices. "No Man's Land in France—We must advance—What our Yankee boys can do."

As if his throat were gripped by a quick hand, a storm of emotion swept him. The little girls—little girls who were the joy, each one, of some home! Such little things as the Germans—in Belgium—"Oh, my God!" The words burst aloud from his lips. These were trusting—innocent, ignorant—to "What our Yankee boys can do." Without that, without the Yankee boys, such as these would be in the power of wild beasts. It was his affair. Suddenly he felt that stab through him.

"God," he prayed, whispering it as the little girls passed on singing, "help me to protect them; help me to forget myself." And the miracle that sends an answer sometimes, even in this twentieth century, to true prayer happened to Jim Barlow. Behold he had forgotten himself. With his head up and peace in his breast, and the look in his face already, though he did not know it, that our

soldier boys wear, he turned and started at a great pace down the street to the recruiting office.

"Why, you did come."

It was nine o'clock and he stood with lighted face in the middle of the little library. And she came in; it was an event to which he never got used, Mary's coming into a room. The room changed always into such an astonishing place.

"Mary, I've done it. I'm—" his voice choked a bit—"I'm a soldier." He laughed at that. "Well not so you'd notice it, yet. But I've taken the first step."

"I knew, Jim. You said you were going to enlist. Why did you telephone you couldn't come?"

He stared down at her, holding her hands yet. He felt, unphrased, strong, the overwhelming conviction that she was the most desirable thing on earth. And directly on top of that conviction another, that he would be doing her desirableness, her loveliness less than the highest honor if he posed before her in false colors. At whatever cost to himself he must be honest with her. Also—

he was something more now than his own man; he was a soldier of America, and inside and out he would be, for America's sake, the best that was in him to be.

"Mary, I've got a thing to tell you."

"Yes?" The sure way in which she smiled up at him made the effort harder.

"I fooled you. You think I'm a hero. And I'm not. I'm a—" for the life of him he could not get out the word "coward." He went on: "I'm a blamed baby." And he told her in a few words, yet plainly enough what he had gone through in the long afternoon. "It was the kiddies who clinched it, with their flags and their hair ribbons—and their Yankee boys. I couldn't stand for—not playing square with them."

Suddenly he gripped her hands so that it hurt. "Mary, God help me, I'll try to fight the devils over there so that kiddies like that, and—you, and all the blessed people, the whole dear shooting-match will be safe over here. I'm glad—I'm so glad I'm going to have a hand in it. Mary, it's queer, but I'm happier than I've been in

months. Only"—his brows drew anxiously. "Only I'm scared stiff for fear you think me—a coward."

He had the word out now. The taste wasn't so bad after all; it seemed oddly to have nothing to do with himself. "Mary, dear, couldn't you—forget that in time? When I've been over there and behaved decently—and I think I will. Somehow I'm not afraid of being afraid now. It feels like a thing that couldn't be done—by a soldier of Uncle Sam's. I'll just look at the other chaps—all heroes, you know—and be so proud I'm with them and so keen to finish our job that I know—somehow I *know* I'll never think about my blooming self at all. It's queer to say it, Mary, but the way it looks now I'm in it, it's not just country even. It's religion. See, Mary?"

There was no sound, no glance from Mary. But he went on, unaware, so rapt was he in his new illumination.

"And when I come back, Mary, with a decent record—just possibly with a war-cross—oh, my word! Think of me! Then, couldn't you forget

this business I've been telling you? Do you think you could marry me then?'

What was the matter? Why did she stand so still with her head bending lower and lower, the color deepening on the bit of cheek that his anxious eyes could see.

"Mary!"

Suddenly she was clutching his collar as if in deadly fear.

"Mary, what's the matter? I'm such a fool, but—oh, Mary, dear!"

With that Mary-dear straightened and, slipping her clutch to the lapel of his old coat, spoke. She looked into his eyes with a smile that was sweeter — oh, much sweeter! — for tears that dimmed it, and she choked most awfully between words. "Jim"—and a choke. "Jim, I'm terrified to think I nearly let you get away. You. And me not worthy to lace your shoes—" ("Oh, gracious, Mary—don't!") "me—the idiot, backing and filling when I had the chance of my life at —at a hero. Oh, Jim!"

"Here! Mary, don't you understand? I've

been telling you I was scared blue. I hated to tell you Mary, and it's the devil to tell you twice—"

What was this? Did Heaven then sometimes come down unawares on the head of an every-day citizen with great lapses of character? Jim Barlow, entranced, doubted his senses yet could not doubt the touch of soft hands clasped in his neck. He held his head back a little to be sure that they were real. Yes, they were there, the hands—Barlow's next remark was long, but untranslatable. Minutes later. "Mary, tell me what you mean. Not that I care much if—if this." Language grows elliptical under stress. "But—did you get me? I'm—a coward." A hand flashed across his mouth.

"Don't you dare. Jim, you're the bravest—bravest—"

The words died in a sharp break. "Why, Jim it was a hundred thousand times pluckier to be afraid and then go. Can't you see that, you big stupid?"

"But, Mary, you said your admired it when—when you thought I was a lion of courage."

"Of course. I admired you. Now I adore you."

"Well," summed up, Barlow bewildered, "if women aren't the blamedest!"

And Mary squealed laughter. She put hands each side of his face. "Jim—listen. I'll try to explain because you have a right to understand."

"Well, yes," agreed Jim.

"It's like this. I thought you'd enlist and I never dreamed you were balky. I didn't know you hated it so. Why didn't you tell me?"

"Go on," urged Jim.

"I thought you were mad to be going, like—like these light-headed boys. That you didn't mind leaving me compared to the adventure. That you didn't care for danger. But now—now." She covered his eyes with her fingers. "Now Jim, you need me. A woman can't love a man her best unless she can help him. Against everything —sorrow, mosquitoes, bad food—drink—any old bother. That's the alluring side of tipplers. Women want to help them. So, now I know you need me," the soft, unsteady voice wandered on,

and Jim, anchored between the hands, drank in her look with his eyes and her tones with his ears and prayed that the situation might last a week. "You need me so, to tell you how much finer you are than if you'd gone off without a quiver."

Barlow sighed in contentment. "And me thinking I was the solitary 'fraid-cat of America!"

"Solitary! Why, Jim, there must be at least ten hundred thousand men going through this same battle. All the ones old enough to think, probably. Why Jim—you're only one of them. In that speech the other night the man said this war was giving men their souls. I think it's your kind he meant, the kind that realizes the bad things over there and the good things over here and goes just the same. The kind—you are."

"I'm a hero from Hero-ville," murmured Barlow. "But little Mary, when I come back mangled will you feel the same? Will you marry me then, Mary?"

"I'll marry you any minute," stated Mary, "and when you come back I'll love you one extra for every mangle."

"Any minute," repeated Barlow dramatically. "Tomorrow?"

And summed up again the heaven that he could not understand and did not want to. "Search me," he adjured the skies in good Americanese, "if girls aren't the blamedest."

THE V. C.

THE V. C.

I HAD forgotten that I ordered frogs' legs. When mine were placed before me I laughed. I always laugh at the sight of frogs' legs because of the person and the day of which they remind me. Nobody noticed that I laughed or asked the reason why, though it was an audible chuckle, and though I sat at the head of my own dinner-party at the Cosmic Club.

The man for whom the dinner was given, Colonel Robert Thornton, my cousin, a Canadian, who got his leg shot off at Vimy Ridge, was making oration about the German Crown Prince's tactics at Verdun, and that was the reason that ten men were not paying attention to me and that I was not paying attention to Bobby. When the good chap talks human talk, tells what happened to people and what their psychological processes seemed to be, he is entertaining. He has a genuine gift of sympathy and a power to lead others

in the path he treads; in short, he tells a good story. But like most people who do one thing particularly well he is always priding himself on the way he does something else. He likes to look at Colonel Thornton as a student of the war, and he has the time of his life when he can get people to listen to what he knows Joffre and Foch and Haig and Hindenberg ought to have done. So at this moment he was enjoying his evening, for the men I had asked to meet him, all strangers to him, ignorant of his real powers, were hanging on his words, partly because no one can help liking him whatever he talks about, and partly because, with that pathetic empty trouser-leg and the crutch hooked over his chair, he was an undoubted hero. So I heard the sentences ambling, and reflected that Hilaire Belloc with maps and a quiet evening would do my tactical education more good than Bobby Thornton's discursions. And about then I chuckled unnoticed, over the silly frogs' legs.

"Tell me, Colonel Thornton, do you consider that the French made a mistake in concentrating

so much of their reserve—" It was the Governor himself who was demanding this earnestly of Bobby. And I saw that the Governor and the rest were hypnotized, and did not need me.

So I sat at the head of the table, and waiters brooded over us, and cucumbers and the usual trash happened, and Bobby held forth while the ten who were bidden listened as to one sent from heaven. And, being superfluous, I withdrew mentally to a canoe in a lonely lake and went frogging.

Vicariously. I do not like frogging in person. The creature smiles. Also he appeals because he is ugly and complacent. But for the grace of God I might have looked so. He sits in supreme hideousness frozen to the end of a wet log, with his desirable hind legs spread in view, and smiles his bronze smile of confidence in his own charm and my friendship. It is more than I can do to betray that smile. So, hating to destroy the beast yet liking to eat the leg, about once in my summer vacation in camp I go frogging, and make the guides do it.

It would not be etiquette to send them out alone, for in our club guides are supposed to do no fishing or shooting—no sport. Therefore, I sit in a canoe and pretend to take a frog in a landing-net and miss two or three and shortly hand over the net to Josef. We have decided on landing-nets as our tackle. I once shot the animals with a .22 Flobert rifle, but almost invariably they dropped, like a larger bullet, off the log and into the mud, and that was the end. We never could retrieve them. Also at one time we fished them with a many-pronged hook and a bit of red flannel. But that seemed too bitter a return for the bronze smile, and I disliked the method, besides being bad at it. We took to the landing-net.

To see Josef, enraptured with the delicate sport, approach a net carefully till within an inch of the smile, and then give the old graven image a smart rap on the legs in question to make him leap headlong into the snare—to see that and Josef's black Indian eyes glitter with joy at the chase is amusing. I make him slaughter

the game instantly, which appears supererogatory to Josef who would exactly as soon have a collection of slimy ones leaping around the canoe. But I have them dead and done for promptly, and piled under the stern seat. And on we paddle to the next.

The day to which I had retired from my dinner-party and the tactical lecture of my distinguished cousin was a late August day of two years before. The frogging fleet included two canoes, that of young John Dudley who was doing his vacation with me, and my own. In each canoe, as is Hoyle for canoeing in Canada, were two guides and a "m'sieur." The other boat, John's, was somewhere on the opposite shore of Lac des Passes, the Lake of the Passes, crawling along edges of bays and specializing in old logs and submerged rocks, after frogs with a landing-net, the same as us. But John—to my mind coarser—was doing his own frogging. The other boat was nothing to us except for an occasional yell when geography brought us near enough, of "How many?" and envy and malice and all uncharitable-

ness if the count was more, and hoots of triumph if less.

In my craft sailed, besides Josef and myself, as bow paddler, The Tin Lizzie. We called him that except when he could hear us, and I think it would have done small harm to call him so then, as he had the brain of a jack-rabbit and managed not to know any English, even when soaked in it daily. John Dudley had named him because of the plebeian and reliable way in which he plugged along Canadian trails. He set forth the queerest walk I have ever seen—a human Ford, John said. He was also quite mad about John. There had been a week in which Dudley, much of a doctor, had treated, with cheerful patience and skill, an infected and painful hand of the guide's, and this had won for him the love eternal of our Tin Lizzie. Little John Dudley thought, as he made jokes to distract the boy, and worked over his big throbbing fist, the fist which meant daily bread—little John thought where the plant of love springing from that seed of gratitude would at last blossom. Little he thought as the two sat on the gallery of

the camp, and the placid lake broke in silver on pebbles below, through what hell of fire and smoke and danger the kindliness he gave to the stupid young guide would be given back to him. Which is getting ahead of the story.

I suggested that the Lizzie might like a turn at frogging, and Josef, with Indian wordlessness, handed the net to him. Whereupon, with his flabby mouth wide and his large gray eyes gleaming, he proceeded to miss four easy ones in succession. And with that Josef, in a gibberish which is French-Canadian patois of the inner circles, addressed the Tin Lizzie and took away the net from him, asking no orders from me. The Lizzie, pipe in mouth as always, smiled just as pleasantly under this punishment as in the hour of his opportunities. He would have been a very handsome boy, with his huge eyes and brilliant brown and red color and his splendid shoulders and slim waist of an athlete if only he had possessed a ray of sense. Yet he was a good enough guide to fill in, for he was strong and willing and took orders amiably from anybody and did his

routine of work, such as chopping wood and filling lamps and bringing water and carrying boats, with entire efficiency. That he had no initiative at all and by no chance did anything he was not told to, even when most obvious, that he was lacking in any characteristic of interest, that he was moreover a supreme coward, afraid to be left alone in the woods—these things were after all immaterial, for, as John pointed out, we didn't really need to love our guides.

John also pointed out that the Lizzie—his name was, incidentally, Aristophe—had one nice quality. Of course, it was a quality which appealed most to the beneficiary, yet it seemed well to me also to have my guests surrounded with mercy and loving kindness. John had but to suggest building a fire or greasing his boots or carrying a canoe over any portage to any lake, and the Lizzie at once leaped with a bright smile as who should say that this was indeed a pleasure. "C'est bien, M'sieur," was his formula. He would gaze at John for sections of an hour, with his flabby mouth open in speechless surprise as if at the unbelievable glory

and magnificence of M'sieur. A nice lad, John Dudley was, but no subtle enchanter; a stocky and well-set-up young man with a whole-souled, garrulous and breezy way, and a gift of slang and a brilliant grin. What called forth hero-worship towards him I never understood; but no more had I understood why Mildred Thornton, Colonel Thornton's young sister, my very beautiful cousin, should have selected him, from a large assortment of suitors, to marry. Indeed I did not entirely understand why I liked having John in camp better than anyone else; probably it was essentially the same charm which impelled Mildred to want to live with him, and the Tin Lizzie to fall down and worship. In any case the Lizzie worshipped with a primitive and unashamed and enduring adoration, which stood even the test of fear. That was the supreme test for the Tin Lizzie, who was a coward of cowards. Rather cruelly I bet John on a day that his satellite did not love him enough to go out to the club-house alone for him, and the next day John was in sore

need of tobacco, not to be got nearer than the club.

"Aristophe will go out and get it for me," he announced as Aristophe—the Lizzie—trotted about the table at lunch-time purveying us flapjacks.

The Tin Lizzie stood rooted a second, petrified at the revolutionary scheme of his going to the club, companions unmentioned. There one saw as if through glass an idea seeking a road through his smooth gray matter. One had always gone to the club with Josef, or Maxime or Pierre—certainly M'sieur meant that; one would of course be glad to go—with Josef or Maxime or Pierre—to get tobacco for M'sieur John. Of course, the idea slid through the old road in the almost unwrinkled gray matter, and came safely to headquarters.

"C'est bien, M'sieur," answered the Lizzie smiling brightly.

And with that I knocked the silly little smile into a cocked hat. "You may start early tomorrow, Aristophe," I said, "and get back by dark,

going light. I can't spare any other men to go with you. But you will certainly not mind going alone—to get tobacco for M'sieur John."

The poor Tin Lizzie turned red and then white, and his weak mouth fell open and his eyebrows lifted till the whites of his eyes showed above the gray irises. And one saw again, through the crystal of his unexercised brain, the operation of a painful and new thought. M'sieur John—a day alone in the woods—love, versus fear—which would win. John and I watched the struggle a bit mercilessly. A grown man gets small sympathy for being a coward. And yet few forms of suffering are keener. We watched; and the Tin Lizzie stood and gasped in the play of his emotions. Nobody had ever given this son of the soil ideals to hold to through sudden danger; no sense of inherited honor to be guarded came to help the Lizzie; he had been taught to work hard and save his skin—little else. The great adoration for John which had swept him off his commonplace feet — was it going to make good against life-long selfish caution? We won-

dered. It was curious to watch the new big feeling fight the long-established petty one. And it was with a glow of triumph quite out of drawing that we saw the generous instinct win the battle.

"Oui, M'sieur," spoke Aristophe, unconscious of subtleties or watching. "I go tomorrow—alone. *C'est bien, M'sieur.*"

It was about the only remark I ever heard him make, that gracious: *"C'est bien, M'sieur!"* But he made it remarkably well. Almost he persuaded me to respect him with that hearty response to the call of duty, that humble and high gift of graciousness. One remembers him as his dolly face lighted at John's order to go and clean trout or carry in logs, and one does not forget the absurd, queer little fast trot at which his powerful young legs would instantaneously swing off to obey the behest. Such was the Tin Lizzie, the guide who paddled bow in my canvas canoe on the day of the celebrated frog hunt.

That the frog hunt was celebrated was owing to the Lizzie. He should have been in John's

boat, as one of John's guides, but at the last moment, there was a confusion of tongues and Lizzie was shipped aboard my canoe. In the excitement of the chase Josef, stern man, had faced about to manipulate his landing-net; [illegible] also slewed around and, sitting on the gunwale, became stern paddler. I was in the middle [illegible] anyhow, watching the frog fishing and [illegible] the enjoyment of the men. [illegible] the only bit of personal [illegible] month of play. [illegible] quite mad with the excitement [illegible] second finde [illegible] frogging. His [illegible] teeth showed [illegible] which he [illegible] language.

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"*Tiens! Encore un!*" hissed the Lizzie in a blood-curdling whisper as a new pair of pop eyes lifted from the edge of a rotten log.

And Josef, who had always seen the frog first, fired a guttural sentence, full of contempt, full of friendliness, for he sized up the Lizzie, his virtues

and his limitations, accurately. And then the boat was pushed and pulled in the shallow water till Josef and the net were within range. With that came the slow approach of the net to the smile, the swift tap on the eatable legs, and headlong into his finish leaped M. Crapaud. Which is not his correct name, Josef tells me, in these parts, but M. Guarron. And that, being translated, means Mr. Very-Big-Bull-Frog.

Business had prospered to fourteen or fifteen head of frogs, and we calculated that the other boat might have a dozen when, facing towards Aristophe, I saw his dull, fresh face suddenly change. My pulse missed a beat at that expression. It was adequate to an earthquake or sudden death. How the fatuous doll-like features could have been made to register that stare of a soul in horror I can't guess. But they did. The whites of his eyes showed an eighth of an inch above the irises and his black eyebrows were shot up to the roots of his glossy black hair. In the gleaming white and gold of his teeth the pipe was still gripped. And while I gazed, astonished, his

unfitting deep voice issued from that mask of fear:

"*Tiens! Encore un!*" And I screwed about and saw that the Lizzie was running the boat on top of an enormous frog which he had not spied till the last second. With that Josef exploded throaty language and leaning sidewise made a dive at the frog. Aristophe, unbalanced with emotion and Josef's swift movement shot from his poise at the end of the little craft, and landed, in a foot of water, flat on his back, and the frog seized that second to jump on his stomach.

I never heard an Indian really laugh before that day. The hills resounded with Josef's shouts. We laughed, Josef and I, till we were weak, and for a good minute Aristophe sprawled in the lake, with the frog anchored as if till Kingdom come on his middle, and howled lusty howls while we laughed. Then Josef fished the frog and got him off the Tin Lizzie's lungs. And Aristophe, weeping, scrambled into the boat. And as we went home in the cool forest twilight, up the portage by the rushing, noisy rapids, Josef,

walking before us, carrying the landing-net full of frogs' legs, shook with laughter every little while again, as Aristophe, his wet strong young legs, the only section of him showing, toiled ahead up the winding thread of a trail, carrying the inverted canoe on his head.

It was this adventure which came to me and seized me and carried me a thousand miles northward into Canadian forest as I looked at the frogs' legs on my plate at the Cosmic Club, and did not listen to my cousin, the Colonel, talking military tactics.

The mental review took an eighth of the time it has taken me to tell it. But as I shook off my dream of the woods, I realized that, while Thornton still talked, he had got out of his uninteresting rut into his interesting one. Without hearing what he said I knew that from the look of the men's faces. Each man's eyes were bright, through a manner of mistiness, and there was a sudden silence which was perhaps what had recalled me.

"It's a war which is making a new standard of

courage," spoke the young Governor in the gentle tone which goes so oddly and so pleasantly with his bull-dog jaw. "It looks as if we were going to be left with a world where heroism is the normal thing," spoke the Governor.

"Heroism—yes," said Bobby, and I knew with satisfaction that he was off on his own line, the line he does not fancy, the line where few can distance him. "Heroism!" repeated Bobby. "It's all around out there. And it crops out—" he began to smile—"in unsuspected places, from varied impulses."

He was working his way to an anecdote. The men at the table, their chairs twisted towards him, sat very still.

"What I mean to say is," Bobby began, "that this war, horrible as it is, is making over human nature for the better. It's burning out selfishness and cowardice and a lot of faults from millions of men, and it's holding up the nobility of what some of them do to the entire world. It takes a character, this débâcle, and smashes out the littleness. Another thing is curious. If a

need of tobacco, not to be got nearer than the club.

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him, but he was such a friendly rascal and so willing to take over others' work that he got along with a fraction of the persecution most of his sort would have had. I wondered sometimes what would happen to the poor little devil when actual fighting came. Would it be *'C'est bien, Mon Capitaine,'* at the order to go over the top, or would the terrible force of fear be too much for him and land him at last with his back to a wall and a firing squad in front—a deserter? Meantime he improved and I got dependent on his radiant good will. Being John Dudley's brother-in-law sanctified me with him, and nothing was too much trouble if I'd give him a chance sometimes to clean John's boots. I have a man now who shows no ecstacy at being ordered to do my jobs, and I don't like him.

We were moved up towards the front, and, though Mr. Winston Churchill has made a row about the O. S.—the officers' servants who are removed from the firing line, I know that a large proportion of them do their share in the trenches. I saw to it that mine did.

One night there was a digging expedition. An advance trench was to be made in No Man's Land about a hundred and fifty yards from the Germans. I was in command of the covering party of thirty-five men; I was a captain. We, of course, went out ahead. Beauramé was in the party. It was his first fighting. We had rifles, with bayonets, and bombs, and a couple of Lewis guns. We came up to the trenches by a road, then went into the zigzag communication trenches up to the front, the fire-trench. Then, very cautiously, over the top into No Man's Land. It was nervous work, for at any second they might discover us and open fire. It suited us all to be as quiet as human men could be, and when once in a while a star-shell, a Very light, was sent up from the German lines we froze in our tracks till the white glare died out.

The party had been digging for perhaps an hour when hell broke loose. They'd seen us. All about was a storm of machine-gun and rifle bullets, and we dropped on our faces, the diggers in their trench—pretty shallow it was. As for

the covering party, we simply took our medicine. And then the shrapnel joined the music. Word was passed to get back to the trenches, and we started promptly. We stooped low as we ran over No Man's Land, but there were plenty of casualties. I got mine in the foot, but not the wound which rung in this——" Thornton nodded his head at the crutches with a smile. "It was from a bit of shrapnel just as I made the trench, and as I fell in I caught at the sand bags and whirled about facing out over No Man's Land; as I whirled I saw, close by, Beauramé's face in a shaft of light. I don't know why I made conversation at that moment—I did. I said:

"When did you get back?"

And his answer came as if clicked on a typewriter. "Me, I stayed, *Mon Capitaine.* It had an air too dangerous, out there."

I stared in a white rage. You'll imagine—one of my men to dare tell me that! And at that second, simultaneously, came the flare of a shell-star and a shout of a man struck down, and I knew the voice—John Dudley. He was out there,

the tail end of the party, wounded. I saw him as he fell, on the farther side of the new trench. Of course, one's instinct was to dash back and bring him in, and I started. And I found my foot gone—I couldn't walk. Quicker than I can tell it I turned to Beauramé, the coward, who'd been afraid to go over the top, and I said in French, because, though I hadn't time to think it out, I yet realized that it would get to him faster so—I said:

"Get over there, you deserter. Save the lieutenant—Lieutenant Dudley. Go."

For one instant I thought it was no good and I was due to have him shot, if we both lived through the night. And then—I never in my life saw such a face of abject fear as the one he turned first to me and then across that horror of No Man's Land. The whites of his eyes showed, it seemed, an eighth of an inch above the irises; his black eyebrows were half way up his forehead, and his teeth, luxuriously upholstered with fillings, shone white and gold in the unearthly light. It was such a mad terror as I'd never

seen before, and never since. And into it I, mad too with the thought of my sister if I let young John Dudley die before my eyes—I bombed again the order to go out and bring in Dudley. I remember the fading and coming expressions on that Frenchman's face like the changes on a moving picture film. I suppose it was half a minute. And here was the coward face gazing into mine, transfigured into the face of a man who cared about another man more than himself—a common man whose one high quality was love.

"*C'est bien, Mon Capitaine,*" Beauramé spoke, through still clicking teeth, and with his regulation smile of good will he had sprung over the parapet in one lithe movement, and I saw him crouching, trotting that absurd, powerful fast trot through the lane in our barbed wire, like lightning, to the shallow new trench, to Dudley. I saw him—for the Germans had the stretch lighted—I saw the man pick up my brother-in-law and toss him over his shoulders and start trotting back. Then I saw him fall, both of them fall, and I knew that he'd stopped a bullet. And

then, as I groaned, somehow Beauramé was on his feet again. I expected that he'd bolt for cover, but he didn't. He bent over deliberately as if he had been a fearless hero—and maybe he was —and he picked up Dudley again and started on, laboring, this time in walking. He was hit badly. But he made the trench; he brought in Dudley.

Then such a howl of hurrahs greeted him from the men who watched the rescue as poor little Aristophe Beauramé——"

"Ah!" I interjected, and Bobby turned and stared—"as the poor little scared rat had not dreamed, or had any right to dream would ever greet his conduct on earth. He dropped Dudley at my feet and turned with his flabby mouth open and his great stupid eyes like saucers, towards the men who rushed to shake his hand and throw at him words of admiration that choked them to get out. And then he keeled over. So you see. It was an equal chance at one second, whether a man should be shot for a deserter or—win the Victoria Cross."

"What!" I shouted at my guest. "What! Not the Victoria Cross! Not Aristophe!"

Bobby looked at me in surprise. "You're a great claque for me," he said. "You seem to take an interest in my hero. Yes, he got it. He was badly hurt. One hand nearly gone and a wound in his side. I was lucky enough to be in London on a day three months later, and to be present at the ceremony, when the young French-Canadian, spoiled for a soldier, but splendid stuff now for a hero, stood out in the open before the troops in front of Buckingham Palace and King George pinned the V. C. on his breast. They say that he's back in his village, and the whole show. I hear that he tells over and over the story of his heroism and the rescue of '*Mon Lieutenant*,' to never failing audiences. Of course, John is looking after him, for the hand which John saved was the hand that was shot to pieces in saving John, and the Tin Lizzie can never make his living with that hand again. A deserter, a coward—decorated by the King with the Victoria Cross! Queer things happen in war!"

There was a stir, a murmur as of voices, of questions beginning, but Bobby was not quite through.

"War takes the best of the best men, and the best of the cheapest, and transfigures both. War doesn't need heroes for heroism. She pins it on anywhere if there's one spot of greatness in a character. War does strange things with humanity," said Bobby.

And I, gasping, broke out crudely in three words: "Our Tin Lizzie!" I said, and nobody knew in the least what I meant, or with what memories I said it.

HE THAT LOSETH HIS LIFE SHALL FIND IT

II

HE THAT LOSETH HIS LIFE SHALL FIND IT

THE Red Cross women had gone home. Half an hour before, the large library had been filled with white-clad, white-veiled figures. Two long tables full, forty of them today, had been working; three thousand surgical dressings had been cut and folded and put away in large boxes on shelves behind glass doors where the most valuable books had held their stately existence for years. The books were stowed now in trunks in the attic. These were war days; luxuries such as first editions must wait their time. The great living-room itself, the center of home for this family since the two boys were born and ever this family had been, the dear big room with its dark carved oak, and tapestries, and stained glass, and books, and memories was given over now to war relief work.

Sometimes, as the mistress walked into the spacious, low-ceilinged, bright place, presences long past seemed to fill it intolerably. Brock and Hugh, little chaps, roared in untidy and tumultuous from football, or came, decorous and groomed, handsome, smart little lads, to be presented to guests. Her own Hugh, her husband, proud of the beautiful new house, smiled from the hearth to her as he had smiled twenty-six years back, the night they came in, a young Hugh, younger than Brock was now. Her father and mother, long gone over "to the majority," and the exquisite old ivory beauty of a beautiful grandmother—such ghosts rose and faced the woman as she stepped into the room where they had moved in life, the room with its loveliness marred by two long tables covered with green oilcloth, by four rows of cheap chairs, by rows and rows of boxes on shelves where soft and bright and dark colors of books had glowed. She felt often that she should explain matters to the room, should tell the walls which had sheltered peace and hospitality that she had consecrated them to yet higher serv-

ice. Never for one instant, while her soul ached for the familiar setting, had she regretted its sacrifice. That her soul did ache made it worth while.

And the women gathered for this branch Red Cross organization, her neighbors on the edge of the great city, wives and daughters and mothers of clerks, and delivery-wagon drivers, and icemen, and night-watchmen, women who had not known how to take their part in the war work in the city or had found it too far to go, these came to her house gladly and all found pleasure in her beautiful room. That made it a joy to give it up to them. She stood in the doorway, feeling an emphasis in the quiet of the July afternoon because of the forty voices which had lately gone out of the sunshiny silence, of the forty busy figures in long, white aprons and white, sweeping veils, the tiny red cross gleaming over the forehead of each one, each face lovely in the uniform of service, all oddly equalized and alike under their veils and crosses. She spoke aloud as she tossed out her hands to the room:

"War will be over some day, and you will be our own again, but forever holy because of this. You will be a room of history when you go to Brock——"

Brock! Would Brock ever come home to the room, to this place which he loved? Brock, in France! She turned sharply and went out through the long hall and across the terrace, and sat down where the steps dropped to the garden, on the broad top step, with her head against the pillar of the balustrade. Above her the smell of box in a stone vase on the pillar punctured the mild air with its definite, reminiscent fragrance. Box is a plant of antecedents of sentiment, of memories. The woman inhaling its delicate sharpness, was caught back into days past. She considered, in rapid jumps of thought, events, episodes, epochs. The day Brock was born, on her own twentieth birthday, up-stairs where the rosy chintz curtains blew now out of the window; the first day she had come down to the terrace—it was June—and the baby lay in his bassinet by the balustrade in that spot—she

looked at the spot—the baby, her big Brock, a bundle of flannel and fine, white stuff in lacy frills of the bassinet. And she loved him; she remembered how she had loved that baby, how, laughing at herself, she had whispered silly words over the stolid, pink head; how the girl's heart of her had all but burst with the astonishing new tide of a feeling which seemed the greatest of which she was capable. Yet it was a small thing to the way she loved Brock now. A vision came of little Hugh, three years younger, and the two toddling about the terrace together, Hugh always Brock's satellite and adorer, as was fitting; less sturdy, less daring than Brock, yet ready to go anywhere if only the older baby led. She thought of the day when Hugh, four years old, had taken fright at a black log among the bushes under the trees.

"It's a bear!" little Hugh had whispered, shaking, and Brock, brave but not too certain, had looked at her, inquiring.

"No, love, it's not a bear; it's an old log of wood. Go and put your hand on it, Hughie."

Little Hugh had cried out and shrunk back. "I'm afraid!" cried little Hugh.

And Brock, not entirely clear as to the no-bear theory, had yet bluffed manfully. "Come on, Hughie; let's go and bang 'um," said Brock.

Which invitation Hugh accepted reluctantly with a condition, "If you'll hold my hand, B'ocky."

The woman turned her head to see the place where the black log had lain, there in the old high bushes. And behold! Two strong little figures in white marched along—she could all but see them today—and the bigger little figure was dragging the other a bit, holding a hand with masterful grip. She could hear little Hugh's laughter as they arrived at the terrible log and found it truly a log. Even now Hugh's laugh was music.

"Why, it's nuffin but an old log o' wood!" little Hugh had squealed, as brave as a lion.

As she sat seeing visions, old Mavourneen, Brock's Irish wolf-hound, came and laid her muzzle on the woman's shoulder, crying a bit, as was Mavourneen's Irish way, for pleasure at find-

ing the mistress. And with that there was a brown ripple and a patter of many soft feet, and a broken wave of dogs came around the corner, seven little cairn-terriers. Sticky and Sandy and their offspring. The woman let Sticky settle in her lap and drew Sandy under her arm, and the puppies looked up at her from the step below with ten serious, anxious eyes and then fell to chasing quite imaginary game up and down the stone steps. Mavourneen sighed deeply and dropped with a heavy thud, a great paw on the edge of the white dress and her beautiful head resting on her paws, the topaz, watchful eyes gazing over the city. The woman put her free hand back and touched the rough head.

"Dear dog!" she spoke.

Another memory came: how they had bought Mavourneen, she and Hugh and the boys, at the kennels in Ireland, eight years ago; how the huge baby had been sent to them at Liverpool in a hamper; the uproarious drive the four of them—Hugh, the two boys, and herself—and Mavourneen had taken in a taxi across the city. The

puppy, astonished and investigating throughout the whole proceeding, had mounted all of them, separately and together, and insisted on lying in big Hugh's lap, crying broken-heartedly at not being allowed. How they had shouted laughter, the four and the boy taxi-driver, all the journey, till they ached! What good times they had always had together, the young father and mother and the two big sons! She reflected how she had not been at all the conventional mother of sons. She had not been satisfied to be gentle and benevolent and look after their clothes and morals. She had lived their lives with them, she had ridden and gone swimming with them, and played tennis and golf, and fished and shot and skated and walked with them, yes, and studied and read with them, all their lives.

"I haven't any respect for my mother," young Hugh told her one day. "I like her like a sister."

She was deeply pleased at this attitude; she did not wish their respect as a visible quality. Vision after vision came of the old times and care-free

days while the four, as happy and normal a family as lived in the world, passed their alert, full days together before the war. Memory after memory took form in the brain of the woman, the center of that light-hearted life so lately changed, so entirely now a memory. War had come.

At first, in 1914, there had been excitement, astonishment. Then the horror of Belgium. One refused to believe that at first; it was a lurid slander on the kindly German people; then one believed with the brain; one's spirit could not grasp it. Unspeakable deeds such as the Germans' deeds—it was like a statement made concerning a fourth dimension of space; civilized modern folk were not so organized as to realize the facts of that bestiality.

"Aren't you thankful we're Americans?" the woman had said over and over.

One day her husband, answering usually with a shake of the head, answered in words. "We may be in it yet," he said. "I'm not sure but we ought to be."

Brock, twenty-one then, had flashed at her:

"I want to be in it. I may just have to be, mother."

Young Hugh yawned a bit at that, and stretching his long arm, he patted his brother's shoulder. "Good old hero, Brock! I'll beat you a set of tennis. Come on."

That sudden speech of Brock's had startled her, had brought the war, in a jump which was like a stab, close. The war and Lindow—their place—how was it possible that this nightmare in Europe could touch the peace of the garden, the sunlit view of the river, the trees with birds singing in them, the scampering of the dogs down the drive? The distant hint of any connection between the great horror and her own was pain; she put the thought away.

Then the *Lusitania* was sunk. All America shouted shame through sobs of rage. The President wrote a beautiful and entirely satisfactory note.

"It should be war—war. It should be war today," Hugh had said, her husband. "We only

waste time. We'll have to fight sooner or later. The sooner we begin, the sooner we'll finish."

"Fight!" young Hugh threw at him. "What with? We can just about make faces at 'em, father."

The boy's father did not laugh. "We had better get ready to do more than make faces; we've got to get ready." He hammered his hand on the stone balustrade. "I'm going to Plattsburg this summer, Evelyn."

"I'm going with you." Brock's voice was low and his mouth set, and the woman, looking at him, saw suddenly that her boy was a man.

"Well, then, as man power is getting low at Lindow, I'll stay and take care of Mummy. Won't I? We'll do awfully well without them, won't we, Mum? You can drive Dad's Rolls-Royce roadster, and if you leave on the hand-brake up-hill, I'll never tell."

Father and son had gone off for the month in camp, and, glad as she was to have the younger boy with her, there was yet an uneasy, an almost subconscious feeling about him, which she indig-

nantly denied each time that it raised its head. It never quite phrased itself, this fear, this wonder if Hugh were altogether as American as his father and brother. Question the courage and patriotism of her own boy? She flung the thought from her as again and yet again it came. People of the same blood were widely different. To Brock and his father it had come easily to do the obvious thing, to go to Plattsburg. It had not so come to young Hugh, but that in good time he would see his duty and do it she would not for an instant doubt. She would not break faith with the lad in thought. With a perfect delicacy she avoided any word that would influence him. He knew. All his life he had breathed loyalty. It was she herself, reading to them night after night through years, who had taught the boys hero worship—above all, worship of American heroes, Washington, Paul Jones, Perry, Farragut, Lee; how Dewey had said, "You may fire now, Gridley, if you are ready"; how Clark had brought the *Oregon* around the continent; how Scott had gone alone among angry Indians. She had taught

them such names, names which will not die while America lives. It was she who had told the little lads, listening wide-eyed, that as these men had held life lightly for the glory of America, so her sons, if need came, must be ready to offer their lives for their country. She remembered how Brock, his round face suddenly scarlet, had stammered out:

"I *am* ready, Mummy. I'd die this minute for —for America. Wouldn't you, Hughie?"

And young Hugh, a slim, blond angel of a boy, of curly, golden hair and unexpected answers, had ducked beneath the hero, upsetting him into a hedge to his infinite anger. "I wouldn't die right now, Brocky," said Hugh. "There's going to be chocolate cake for lunch."

One could never count on Hugh's ways of doing things, but Brock was a stone wall of reliability. She smiled, thinking of his youth and beauty and entire boyishness, to think yet of the saying from the Bible which always suggested Brock, "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." It was so with the lad; through

the gay heart and eager interest in life pulsed an atmosphere of deep religiousness. He was always "in perfect peace," and his mother, less balanced, had stayed her mind on that quiet and right young mind from its very babyhood. The lad had seen his responsibilities and lifted them all his life. It came to her how, when her own mother, very dear to Brock, had died, she had not let the lads go with her to the house of death for fear of saddening their youth, and how, when she and their father came home from the hard, terrible business of the funeral, they met little Hugh on the drive, rapturous at seeing them again, rather absorbed in his new dog. But Brock, then fourteen, was in the house alone, quiet, his fresh, dear face red with tears, and a black necktie of his father's, too large for him, tied under his collar. Of all the memories of her boys, that grotesque black tie was the most poignant and most precious. It said much. It said: "I also, O, my mother, am of my people. I have a right to their sorrows as well as to their joys, and if you do not give me my place in trouble, I shall do what

I can alone, being but a boy. I shall give up play, and I shall wear mourning as I can, not knowing how very well, but pushed by all my being to be with my own in their mourning."

Quickly affection for the other lad asserted itself. Brock and Hugh were different, but Hugh was a dear boy, too—undeveloped, that was all. He had never taken life seriously, little Hugh, and now that this war-cloud hung over the world, he simply refused to look at it; he turned away his face. That was all, a temperament which loved harmony and shrank from ugliness; these things were young Hugh's limitations, and no ignoble quality.

In a long dream, yet much faster than the words have told it, in comprehensive flashes of memory, her elbows on her knees and her face, in her slender hands, looking out over the garden with its arched way of roses, with its high hedge, looking past the loveliness that was home to the city pulsing in summer heat, to the shining zigzag of river beyond the city, the woman reviewed her boys' lives. Boys were

not now merely one phase of humanity; they had suddenly become the nation. They stood in the foreground of a world crisis; back of them America was ranged, orderly, living and moving to feed, clothe, and keep happy these millions of lads holding in their hands the fate of the earth. Her boys were but two, yet necessary. She owed them to the country, as other mothers of men.

There was a whistle under the archway, a flying step, and young Hugh shot from beneath the rosiness of Dorothy Perkins vines and took the stone steps in four bounds. All the dogs fell into a community chorus of barks and whines and patterings about, and Hugh's hands were on this one and that as he bent over the woman.

"A *good* kiss, Mummy; that's cold baked potato," he complained, and she laughed and hugged him.

"Not cold; I was just thinking. Your knee, Hughie? You came up like a bird."

Hugh made a face. "Bad break, that," he grinned, and limped across the terrace and back. "Mummy, it doesn't hurt much now, and I do

forget," he explained, and his color deepened. With that: "Tom Arthur is waiting for me in town. We're going to pick up Whitney, the tennis champion, at the Crossroads Club. May I take Dad's roadster?"

"Yes, Hughie. And, Hugh, meet the train, the seven-five. Dad's coming to-night, you know."

The boy took her hand, looked at her uneasily. "Mummy, dear, don't be thinking sinful thoughts about me. And don't let Dad. Hold your fire, Mummy."

She lifted her face, and her eyes were the eyes of faith he had known all his life. "You blessed boy of mine, I will hold my fire." And then Hugh had all but knocked her over with a violent kiss again, and he slammed happily through the screen doors and was leaping up the stairs. Ten minutes later she heard the car purring down the drive.

The dogs settled about her with long dog-sighs again. She looked at her wrist—only five-thirty. She went back with a new unrest to her thoughts. Hugh's knee—it was odd; it had lasted a long time, ever since—she shuddered a bit, so that old

Mavourneen lifted her head and objected softly—ever since war was declared. Over a year! To be sure, he had hurt it again badly, slipping on the ice in December, just as it was getting strong. She wished that his father would not be so grim when Hugh's bad knee was mentioned. What did he mean? Did he dare to think her boy—the word was difficult even mentally—a slacker? With that her mind raced back to the days just before Hugh had hurt this knee. It was in February that Germany had proclaimed the oceans closed except along German paths, at German times. "This is war at last," her husband had said, and she knew the inevitable had come.

Night after night she had lain awake facing it, sometimes breaking down utterly and shaking her soul out in sobs, sometimes trying to see ways around the horror, trying to believe that war must end before our troops could get ready, often with higher courage glorying that she might give so much for country and humanity. Then, in the nights, things that she had read far back, unrealizing, rose and confronted her with awful reality.

Brutalities, atrocities, wounds, barbarous captivity—nightmares which the Germans had dug out of the grave of savagery and sent stalking over the earth—such rose and stood before the woman lying awake night after night. At first her soul hid its face in terror at the gruesome thoughts; at first her mind turned and fled and refused to believe. Her boys, Brock and Hugh! It was not credible, it was not reasonable, it was out of drawing that her good boys, her precious boys trained to be happy and help the world, to live useful, peaceful lives, should be snatched from home, here in America, and pitched into the ghastly struggle of Europe. Push back the ocean as she might, the ocean surged every day nearer.

Daytimes she was as brave as the best. She could say: "If we had done it the day after the *Lusitania*, that would have been right. It would have been all over now." She could say: "My boys? They will do their duty like other women's boys." But nights, when she crept into bed and the things she had read of Belgium, of Serbia, came and stood about her, she knew that hers

were the only boys in the world who could not, *could* not be spared. Brock and Hugh! It seemed as if it would be apparent to the dullest that Brock and Hugh were different from all others. She could suffer; she could have gone over there light-hearted and faced any danger to save *them*. Of course! That was natural! But—Brock and Hugh! The little heads that had lain in the hollow of her arm; the noisy little boys who had muddied their white clothes, and broken furniture, and spilled ink; the tall, beautiful lads who had been her pride and her everlasting joy, her playmates, her lovers—Brock and Hugh! Why, there had never been on earth love and friendship in any family close and unfailing like that of the four.

Night after night, nearer and nearer, the ghosts from Belgium and Serbia and Poland stood about her bed, and she fought with them as one had fought with the beasts at Ephesus. Day after day she cheered Brock and the two Hughs and filled them with fresh patriotism. Of course, she would not have her own fail in a hair's breadth of eager service to their flag. Of course! And as

she lifted up, for their sakes, her heart, behold a miracle, for her heart grew high! She began to feel the words she said. It came to her in very truth that to have the world as one wanted it was not now the point; the point was a greater goal which she had never in her happy life even visualized. It began to rise before her, a distant picture glorious through a mist of suffering, something built of the sacrifice, and the honor, and the deathless bravery of millions of soldiers in battle, of millions of mothers at home. The education of a nation to higher ideals was reaching the quiet backwater of this one woman's soul. There were lovelier things than life; there were harder things than death. Service is the measure of living. If the boys were to compress years of good living into a flame of serving humanity for six months, who was she, what was life here, that she should be reluctant? To play the game, for herself and her sons, this was the one thing worth while. More and more entirely, as the stress of the strange, hard vision crowded out selfishness, this woman, as thousands

and tens of thousands all over America, lifted up her heart—the dear things that filled and were her heart—unto the Lord.

And with that she was aware of a recurring unrest. She was aware that there was something her husband did not say to her about the boys, about young Hugh. Brock had been hard to hold for nearly two years now, but his father had thought for reasons, that he should not serve until his own flag called him. Now it would soon be calling, and Brock would go instantly. But young Hugh? What did the boy's attitude mean?

"I can't make out Hughie," his father had said to her in March, 1917, when it was certain that war was coming. "What does this devil-may-care pose about the war mean?"

And she answered: "Let Hughie work it out, Hugh. He's in trouble in his mind, but he'll come through. We'll give him time."

"Oh, very well," Hugh the elder had agreed, "but young Americans will have to take their

stand shortly. I couldn't bear it if a son of mine were a slacker."

She tossed out her hands. "Slacker! Don't dare say it of my boy!"

The hideous word followed her. That night, when she lay in bed and looked out into the moonlit wood, and saw the pines swaying like giant fans across a pulsing, pale sky, and listened to the summer wind blowing through the tall heads of them, again through the peace of it the word stabbed. A slacker! She set to work to fancy how it would be if Brock and Hugh both went to war and were both killed. She faced the thought. Life—years of it—without Brock and Hugh! She registered that steadily in her mind. Then she painted to herself another picture, Brock and Hugh not going to war, at home ignominiously safe. Other women's sons marching out into the danger—men, heroes! Brock and Hugh explaining, steadily explaining why they had not gone! Brock and Hugh after the war, mature men, meeting returning soldiers, old friends who had borne the burden and heat, them-

selves with no memories of hideous, infinitely precious days, of hardships, and squalid trench life, and deadly pain—for America! Brock and Hugh going on through life into old age ashamed to hold up their heads and look their comrades in the eye! Or else—it might be—Brock and Hugh lying next year, this year, in unknown, honored graves in France! Which was worse? And the aching heart of the woman did not wait to answer. Better a thousand times brave death than a coward's life. She would choose so if she knew certainly that she sent them both to death. The education of the war, the new glory of patriotism, had already gone far in this one woman.

And then the thought stabbed again—a slacker—Hugh! How did his father dare say it? A poisonous terror, colder than the fear of death, crawled into her soul and hid there. Was it possible that Hugh, brilliant, buoyant, temperamental Hugh was—that? The days went on, and the cold, vile thing stayed coiled in her soul. It was on the very day war was declared that young Hugh injured his knee, a bad injury. When he

was carried home, when the doctor cut away his clothes and bent over the swollen leg and said wise things about the "bursa," the boy's eyes were hard to meet. They constantly sought hers with a look questioning and anxious. Words were impossible, but she tried to make her glance and manner say: "I trust you. Not for worlds would I believe you did it on purpose."

And finally the lad caught her hand and with his mouth against it spoke. "*You* know I didn't do it on purpose, Mummy."

And the cold horror fled out of her heart, and a great relief flooded her.

On a day after that Brock came home from camp, and, though he might not tell it in words, she knew that he would sail shortly for France. She kept the house full of brightness and movement for the three days he had at home, yet the four—young Hugh on crutches now—clung to each other, and on the last afternoon she and Brock were alone for an hour. They had sat just here after tennis, in the hazy October weather, and pink-brown leaves had floated down with a

thin, pungent fragrance and lay on the stone steps in vague patterns. Scarlet geraniums bloomed back of Brock's head and made a satisfying harmony with the copper of his tanned face. They fell to silence after much talking, and finally she got out something which had been in her mind but which it had been hard to say.

"Brocky," she began, and jabbed the end of her racket into her foot so that it hurt, because physical pain will distract and steady a mind. "Brocky, I want to ask you to do something."

"Yes'm," answered Brock.

"It's this. Of course, I know you're going soon, over there."

Brock looked at her gravely.

"Yes, I know. I want to ask you if—if *it* happens—will you come and tell me yourself? If it's allowed."

Brock did not even touch her hand; he knew well she could not bear it. He answered quietly, with a sweet, commonplace manner as if that other world to which he might be going was a place too familiar in his thoughts for any great strain

in speaking of it. "Yes, Mummy," he said. "Of course I will. I'd have wanted to anyway, even if you hadn't said it. It seems to me—" He lifted his young face, square-jawed, fresh-colored, and there was a vision-seeing look in his eyes which his mother had known at times before. He looked across the city lying at their feet, and the river, and the blue hills beyond, and he spoke slowly, as if shaping a thought. "So many fellows have 'gone west' lately that there must be some way. It seems as if all that mass of love and—and desire to reach back and touch—the ones left—as if all that must have built a sort of bridge over the river—so that a fellow might probably come back and—and tell his mother—"

Brock's voice stopped, and suddenly she was in his arms, his face was against hers, and hot tears not her own were on her cheek. Then he was shaking his head as if to shake off the strong emotion.

"It's not likely to happen, dear. The casualties in this war are tremendously lower than in—"

"I know," she interrupted. "Of course, they

are. Of course, you're coming home without a scratch, and likely a general, and conceited beyond words. How will we stand you!"

Brock laughed delightedly. "You're a peach," he stated. "That's the sort. Laughing mothers to send us off—it makes a whale of a difference."

That October afternoon had now dropped eight months back, and still the house seemed lost without Brock, especially on this June twentieth, the day that was his and hers, the day when there had always been "doings" second only to Christmas at Lindow. But she gathered up her courage like a woman. Hugh the elder was coming tonight from his dollar-a-year work in Washington, her man who had moved heaven and earth to get into active service, and who, when finally refused because of his forty-nine years and a defective eye, had left his great business as if it were a joke, and had put his whole time, and strength, and experience, and fortune at the service of the Government—as plenty of other American men were doing. Hugh was coming in time for her birthday dinner, and young Hugh was with them— Her

heart shrank as if a sharp thing touched it. How would it be when they rose to drink Brock's health? She knew pretty well what her cousin, the judge, would say:

"The soldier in France! God bring him home well and glorious!"

How would it be for her other boy then, the boy who was not in France? Unphrased, a thought flashed, "I hope, I do hope Hughie will be very lame tonight."

The little dog slipped from her and barked in remonstrance as she threw out her hands and stood up. Old Mavourneen pulled herself to her feet, too, a huge, beautiful beast, and the woman stooped and put her arm lovingly about the furry neck. "Mavourneen, you know a lot. You know our Brock's away." At the name the big dog whined and looked up anxious, inquiring. "And you know—do you know, dear dog, that Hughie ought to go? Do you? Mavourneen, it's like the prayer-book says, 'The burden of it is intolerable.' I can't bear to lose him, and I can't, O God! I can't bear to keep him." She straightened. "As

you say, Mavourneen, it's time to dress for dinner."

The birthday party went better than one could have hoped. Nobody broke down at Brock's name; everybody exulted in the splendid episode of his heroism, months back, which had won him the war cross. The letter from Jim Colledge and his own birthday letter, garrulous and gay, were read. Brock had known well that the day would be hard to get through and had made that letter out of brutal cheerfulness. Yet every one felt his longing to be at the celebration, missed for the first time in his life, pulsing through the words. Young Hugh read it and made it sweet with a lovely devotion to and pride in his brother. A heart of stone could not have resisted Hugh that night. And then the party was over, and the woman and her man, seeing each other seldom now, talked over things for an hour. After, through her open door, she saw a bar of light under the door of the den, Brock's and Hugh's den.

"Hughie," she spoke, and on the instant the dark panel flashed into light.

"Come in, Mummy. I've been waiting to talk to you."

"Waiting, my lamb?"

Hugh pushed her, as a boy shoves a sister, into the end of the sofa. There was a wood fire on the hearth in front of her, for the June evening was cool, and luxurious Hugh liked a fire. A reading lamp was lighted above Brock's deep chair, and there were papers on the floor by it, and more low lights. There were magazines about, and etchings on the walls, and bits of university plunder, and the glow of rugs and of books. It was as fascinating a place as there was in all the beautiful house. In the midst of the bright peace Hugh stood haggard.

"Hughie! What is it?"

"Mother," he whispered, "help me!"

"With my last drop of blood, Hugh."

"I can't go on—alone—mother." His eyes were wild, and his words labored into utterance. "I—I don't know what to do—mother."

"The war, Hughie?"

"Of course! What else is there?" he flung at her.

"But your knee?"

"Oh, Mummy, you know as well as I that my knee is well enough. Dad knows it, too. The way he looks at me—or dodges looking! Mummy —I've got to tell you—you'll have to know—and maybe you'll stop loving me. I'm—" He threw out his arms with a gesture of despair. "I'm—afraid to go." With that he was on his knees beside her, and his arms gripped her, and his head was hidden in her lap. For a long minute there was only silence, and the woman held the young head tight.

Hugh lifted his face and stared from blurred eyes. "A man might better be dead than a coward —you're thinking that? That's it." A sob stopped his voice, the young, dear voice. His face, drawn into lines of age, hurt her unbearably. She caught him against her and hid the beloved, impossible face.

"Hugh—I—judging you—I? Why, Hughie,

I *love* you—I only love you. I don't stand off and think, when it's you and Brock. I'm inside your hearts, feeling it with you. I don't know if it's good or bad. It's—my own. Coward—Hughie! I don't think such things of my darling."

"'There's no—friend like a mother,'" stammered young Hugh, and tears fell unashamed. His mother had not seen the boy cry since he was ten years old. He went on. "Dad didn't say a word, because he wouldn't spoil your birthday, but the way he dodged—my knee——" He laughed miserably and swabbed away tears with the corner of his pajama coat. "I wish I had a hanky," he complained. The woman dried the tear-stained cheeks hastily with her own. "Dad's got it in for me," said Hugh. "I can tell. He'll make me go—now. He—he suspects I went skating that day hoping I'd fall—and—I knew it wasn't so darned unlikely. Yes—I did—not the first time—when I smashed it; that was entirely—luck." He laughed again, a laugh that was a sob. "And now—oh, Mummy, have I *got* to go into that

nightmare? I hate it so. I am—I *am*—afraid. If—if I should be there and—and sent into some terrible job—shell-fire—dirt—smells—dead men and horses—filth—torture—mother, I might run. I don't feel sure. I can't trust Hugh Langdon—he might run. Anyhow"—the lad sprang to his feet and stood before her—"anyhow—why am *I* bound to get into this? I didn't start it. My Government didn't. And I've everything, *everything* before me here. I didn't tell you, but that editor said—he said I'd be one of the great writers of the time. And I love it, I love that job. I can do it. I can be useful, and successful, and an honor to you—and happy, oh, so happy! If only I may do as Arnold said, be one of America's big writers! I've everything to gain here; I've everything to lose there." He stopped and stood before her like a flame.

And from the woman's mouth came words which she had not thought, as if other than herself spoke them. "'What shall it profit a man,'" she spoke, "'if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?'"

At that the boy plunged on his knees in collapse and sobbed miserably. "Mother, mother! Don't be merciless."

"Merciless! My own laddie!" There seemed no words possible as she stroked the blond head with shaking hand. "Hughie," she spoke when his sobs quieted. "Hughie, it's not how you feel; it's what you do. I believe thousands and thousands of boys in this unwarlike country have gone—are going—through suffering like yours."

Hugh lifted wet eyes. "Do you think so, Mummy?"

"Indeed I do. Indeed I do. And I pray that the women who love them are—faithful. For I know, I *know* that if a woman lets her men, if a mother let her sons fail their country now, those sons will never forgive her. It's your honor I'm holding to, Hughie, against human instinct. After this war, those to be pitied won't be the sonless mothers or the crippled soldiers—it will be the men of fighting age who have not fought. Even if they could not, even at the best, they will spend the rest of their lives explaining why."

Hugh sat on the sofa now, close to her, and his head dropped on her shoulder. "Mummy, that's some comfort, that dope about other fellows taking it as I do. I felt lonely. I thought I was the only coward in America. Dad's condemning me; he can't speak to me naturally. I felt as if"—his voice faltered—"as if I couldn't stand it if you hated me, too."

The woman laughed a little. "Hughie, you know well that not anything to be imagined could stop my loving you."

He went on, breathing heavily but calmed. "You think that even if I am a blamed fool, if I went anyhow—that I'd rank as a decent white man? In your eyes—Dad's—my own?"

"I know it, Hughie. It's what you do, not how you feel doing it."

"If Brock would hold my hand!" The eyes of the two met with a dim smile and a memory of the childhood so near, so utterly gone. "I'd like Dad to respect me again," the boy spoke in a wistful, uncertain voice. "It's darned wretched to have your father despise you." He looked at

her then. "Mummy, you're tired out; your face is gray. I'm a beast to keep you up. Go to bed, dear."

He kissed her, and with his arm around her waist led her through the dark hall to the door of her room, and kissed her again. And again, as she stood and watched there, he turned on the threshold of the den and threw one more kiss across the darkness, and his face shone with a smile that sent her to bed, smiling through her tears. She lay in the darkness, fragrant of honeysuckle outside, and her sore heart was full of the boys—of Hugh struggling in his crisis; still more, perhaps, of Brock whose birthday it was, Brock in France, in the midst of "many and great dangers," yet—she knew—serene and buoyant among them because his mind was "stayed." Not long these thoughts held her, for she was so deadened with the stress of many emotions that nature asserted itself and shortly she fell asleep.

It may have been two or three hours she slept. She knew afterward that it must have been at about three of the summer morning when a dream

came which, detailed and vivid as it was, probably filled in time only the last minute or so before awakening. It seemed to her that glory suddenly flooded the troubled world; the infinite, intimate joy, impossible to put into words, was yet a defined and long first chapter of her dream. After that she stood on the bank of a river, a river perhaps miles wide, and with the new light-heartedness filling her she looked and saw a mighty bridge which ran brilliant with many-colored lights, from her to the misty further shore of the river. Over the bridge passed a throng of radiant young men, boys, all in uniform. "How glorious!" she seemed to cry out in delight, and with that she saw Brock.

Very far off, among the crowd of others, she saw him, threading his way through the throng. He came, unhurried yet swift, and on his face was an amused, loving smile which was perhaps the look of him which she remembered best. By his side walked old Mavourneen, the wolf-hound, Brock's hand on the shaggy head. The two swung steadily toward her, Brock smiling into

her eyes, holding her eyes with his, and as they were closer, she heard Mavourneen crying in wordless dumb joy, crying as she had not done since the day when Brock came home the last time. Above the sound Brock's voice spoke, every trick of inflection so familiar, so sweet, that the joy of it was sharp, like pain.

"Mother, I'm coming to take Hughie's hand—to take Hughie's hand," he repeated.

And with that Mavourneen's great cry rose above his voice. And suddenly she was awake. Somewhere outside the house, yet near, the dog was loudly, joyfully crying. Out of the deep stillness of the night burst the sound of the joyful crying.

The woman shot from her bed and ran barefooted, her heart beating madly, into the darkness of the hall to the landing on the stairway. Something halted her. There was a broad, uncurtained pane of glass in the front door of the house. From the landing one might look down the stone steps outside and see clearly in the bright moonlight as far as the beginning of the

rose archway. As she stood gasping, from beneath the flowers Brock stepped into the moonlight and began, unhurried, buoyant, as she had but now seen him in her dream, to mount the steps. Mavourneen pressed at his side, and his hand was on the dog's head. As he came, he lifted his face to his mother with the accustomed, every-day smile which she knew, as if he were coming home, as he had come home on many a moonlit evening from a dance in town to talk the day over with her. As she stared, standing in the dark on the landing, her pulse racing, yet still with the stillness of infinity, an arm came around her, a hand gripped her shoulder, and young Hugh's voice spoke.

"Mother! It's Brock!" he whispered.

At the words she fled headlong down to the door and caught at the handle. It was fastened, and for a moment she could not think of the bolt. Brock stood close outside; she saw the light on his brown head and the bend in the long, strong fingers that caressed Mavourneen's fur. He smiled at her happily—Brock—three feet away. Just as the

bolt loosened, with an inexplicable, swift impulse she was cold with terror. For the half of a second, perhaps, she halted, possessed by some formless fear stronger than herself—humanity dreading something not human, something unknown, overwhelming. She halted not a whole second—for it was Brock. Brock! Wide open she flung the door and sprang out.

There was no one there. Only Mavourneen stood in the cold moonlight, and cried, and looked up, puzzled, at empty air.

"Oh, Brock, Brock! Oh, dear Brock!" the woman called and flung out her arms. "Brock—Brock—don't leave me. Don't go!"

Mavourneen sniffed about the dark hall, investigating to find the master who had come home and gone away so swiftly. With that young Hugh was lifting her in his arms, carrying her up the broad stairs into his room. "You're barefooted," he spoke brokenly.

She caught his hand as he wrapped her in a rug on the sofa. "Hugh — you saw — it was Brock?"

"Yes, dearest, it was our Brock," answered Hugh stumblingly.

"You saw—and I—and Mavourneen."

"Mavourneen is Irish," young Hugh said. "She has the second sight," and the big old dog laid her nose on the woman's knee and lifted topaz eyes, asking questions, and whimpered broken-heartedly.

"Dear dog," murmured the woman and drew the lovely head to her. "You saw him." And then; "Hughie—he came to tell us. He is—dead."

"I think so," whispered young Hugh with bent head.

Then, fighting for breath, she told what had happened—the dream, the intense happiness of it, how Brock had come smiling. "And Hugh, the only thing he said, two or three times over, was, 'I'm coming to take Hughie's hand.' "

The lad turned upon her a shining look. "I know, mother. I didn't hear, of course, but I knew, when I saw him, it was for me, too. And

I'm ready. I see my way now. Mother, get Dad."

Hugh, the elder, still sleeping in his room at the far side of the house, opened heavy eyes. Then he sprang up. "Evelyn! What is it?"

"Oh, Hugh — come! Oh, Hugh! Brock — Brock—" She could not say the words; there was no need. Brock's father caught her hands. In bare words then she told him.

"My dear," urged the man, "you've had a vivid dream. That's all. You were thinking about the boys; you were only half awake; Mavourneen began to cry—the dog means Brock. It was easy—" his voice faltered—"to—to believe the rest."

"Hugh, I *know*, dear. Brock came to tell me. He said he would." Later, that day, when a telegram arrived from the War Office there was no new shock, no added certainty to her assurance. She went on: "Hughie saw him. And Mavourneen. But I can't argue. We still have a boy, Hugh, and he needs us—he's waiting. Oh, my dear, Hughie is going to France!"

"Thank God!" spoke Hugh's father.

Hand tight in hand like young lovers the two came across to the room where their boy waited, tense. "Father—Dad—you'll give me back your respect, won't you?" The strong young hand held out was shaking. "Because I'm going, Dad. But you have to know that I was—a coward."

"*No*, Hugh."

"Yes. And Dad, I'm afraid—now. But I've got the hang of things, and nothing could keep me. Will you, do you despise me—now—that I still hate it—if—if I go just the same?"

The big young chap shook so that his mother, his tall mother, put her arms about him to steady him. He clutched her hand hard and repeated, through quivering lips, "Would you despise me still, Dad?"

For a moment the father could not answer. Then difficult tears of manhood and maturity forced their way from his eyes and unheeded rolled down his cheeks. With a step he put his arms about the boy as if the boy were a child, and the boy threw his about his father's shoulders.

For a long second the two tall men stood so. The woman, standing apart, through the shipwreck of her earthly life was aware only of happiness safe where sorrow and loss could not touch it. What was separation, death itself, when love stronger than death held people together as it held Hugh and her boys and herself? Then the elder Hugh stood away, still clutching the lad's hand, smiling through unashamed tears.

"Hugh," he said, "in all America there's not a man prouder of his son than I am of you. There's not a braver soldier in our armies than the soldier who's to take my name into France." He stopped and steadied himself; he went on: "It would have broken my heart, boy, if you had failed—failed America. And your mother—and Brock and me. Failed your own honor. It would have meant for us shame and would have bowed our heads; it would have meant for you disaster. Don't fear for your courage, Hugh; the Lord won't forsake the man who carries the Lord's colors."

Young Hugh turned suddenly to his mother.

"I'm at peace now. You and Dad—honor me. I'll deserve respect from—my country. It will be a wall around me— And—" he caught her to him and crushed his mouth to hers—"dearest—Brock will hold my hand."

THE SILVER STIRRUP

THE SILVER STIRRUP

IN the most unexpected spots vital sparks of history blaze out. Time seems, once in a while, powerless to kill a great memory. Romance blooms sometimes untarnished across centuries of commonplace. In a new world old France lives.

. . . .

It is computed that about one-seventh of the French-Canadian population of Canada enlisted in the great war. The stampede of heroism seems to have left them cold. A Gospel of the Province first congealed the none too fiery blood of the *habitants*, small farmers, very poor, thinking in terms of narrowest economy, of one pig and ten children, of painstaking thrift and a bare margin to subsistence. Such conditions stifle world interests. The earthquake which threatened civilization disturbed the *habitant* merely because it hazarded his critical balance on the edge of want.

The cataclysm over the ocean was none of his affair. And his affairs pressed. What about the pig if one went to war? And could Alphonse, who is fourteen, manage the farm so that there would be vegetables for winter? Tell me that.

When in September, 1914, I went to Canada for two weeks of camping I had heard of this point of view. Dick Lindsley and I were met at the Club Station on the casual railway which climbs the mountains through Quebec Province, by four guides, men from twenty to thirty-five, powerfully built chaps, deep-shouldered and slim-waisted, lithe as wild-cats. It was a treat to see their muscles, like machines in the pink of order, adjust to the heavy *pacquetons*, send a canoe whipping through the water. There was one exception to the general physical perfection; one of Dick's men, a youngster of perhaps twenty-two, limped. He covered ground as well as the others, for all of that; he picked the heaviest load and portaged it at an uneven trot, faster than his comrades; he was what the *habitants* call "ambitionné." Dick's canoe was loaded first, owing to

the fellow's efficiency, and I waited while it got away and watched the lame boy. He had an interesting face, aquiline and dark, set with vivid light-blue eyes, shooting restless fire. I registered an intention to get at this lad's personality. The chance came two days later. My men were off chopping on a day, and I suddenly needed to go fishing.

"Take Philippe," offered Dick. "He handles a boat better than any of them."

Philippe and I shortly slipped into the Guardian's Pool, at the lower end of the long lake of the Passes. "It is here, M'sieur," Philippe announced, "that it is the custom to take large ones."

By which statement the responsibility of landing record trout was on my shoulders. I thought I would have a return whack. My hands in the snarly flies and my back to Philippe I spoke around my pipe, yet spoke distinctly.

"Why aren't you in France fighting?"

The canoe shivered down its length as if the man at its stern had jumped. There was a silence. Then Philippe's deep, boyish voice answered.

"As M'sieur sees, one is lame."

I felt a hotness emerging from my flannel collar and rushing up my face as I bent over that damned Silver Doctor that wouldn't loose its grip on the Black Hackle. I didn't see the Black Hackle or the Silver Doctor for a moment. "Beg pardon," I growled. "I forgot." I mumbled platitudes.

"M'sieur le Docteur has right," Philippe announced unruffled. "One should fight for France. I have tried to enlist, there are three times, explaining that I am '*capable*' though I walk not evenly. But one will not have me. Therefore I have shame, me. I have, naturally, more shame than another because of Jeanne."

"Because of Jeanne?" I repeated. "Who is Jeanne?"

There was a pause; a queer feeling made me slew around. Philippe's old felt hat was being pulled off as if he were entering a church.

"But—Jeanne, M'sieur," he stated as if I must understand. "Jeanne d'Arc. *Tiens*—the Maid of France."

"The Maid of France!" I was puzzled. "What has she to do with it?"

"But everything, M'sieur." The vivid eyes flamed. "M'sieur does not know, perhaps, that my grandfather fought under Jeanne?"

"Your grandfather!" I flung it at him in scorn. The man was a poor lunatic.

"But yes, M'sieur. My grandfather, lui-même."

"But, Philippe, the Maid of Orleans died in 1431." I remembered that date. The Maid is one of my heroic figures.

Philippe shrugged his shoulders. "Oh—as for a *grandpère!* But not the *grandpère à present,* he who keeps the grocery shop in St. Raymond. Certainly not that grandfather. It is to say the *grandpère* of that *grandpère.* Perhaps another yet, or even two or three more. What does it matter? One goes back a few times of grandfathers and behold one arrives at him who was armorer for the Maid—to whom she gave the silver stirrup."

"The silver stirrup." My Leonard rod bumped along the bow; my flies tangled again in the cur-

rent. I squirmed about till I faced the guide in the stern. "Philippe, what in hell do you mean by this drool of grandfathers and silver stirrups?"

The boy, perfectly respectful, not forgetting for a second his affair of keeping the canoe away from the fish-hole, looked at me squarely, and his uncommon light eyes gleamed out of his face like the eyes of a prophet. "M'sieur, it is a tale doubtless which seems strange to you, but to us others it is not strange. M'sieur lives in New York, and there are automobiles and trolley-cars and large buildings *en masse*, and to M'sieur the world is made of such things. But there are other things. We who live in quiet places, know. One has not too much of excitement, we others, so that one remembers a great event which has happened to one's family many years. Yes, indeed, M'sieur, centuries. If one has not much one guards as a souvenir the tale of the silver stirrup of Jeanne. Yes, for several generations."

The boy was apparently unconscious that his remarks were peculiar. "Philippe, will you tell

me what you mean by a silver stirrup which Jeanne d'Arc gave to your ancestors?"

"But with pleasure, M'sieur," he answered readily, with the gracious French politeness which one meets among the *habitants* side by side with sad lapses of etiquette. "It is all-simple that the old grandfather, the ancient, he who lived in France when the Maid fought her wars, was an armorer. "*Ça fait que*"—*sa fak*, Philippe pronounced it—"so it happened that on a day the stirrup of the Maid broke as her horse plunged, and my grandfather, the ancient, he ran quickly and caught the horse's head. And so it happened—*ce fait que*—that my grandfather was working at that moment on a fine stirrup of gold for her harness, for though they burned her afterwards, they gave her then all that there was of magnificence. And the old fellow—*le vieux*—whipped out the golden stirrup from his pocket, quite prepared for use, so it happened—and he put it quickly in the place of the silver one which she had been using. And Jeanne smiled. 'You are ready to serve France, Armorer.'

"She bent then and looked *le vieux* in the face—but he was young at the time.

" 'Are you not Baptiste's son, of Doremy?' asked the Maid.

" 'Yes, Jeanne,' said my *grandpère.*

" 'Then keep the silver stirrup to remember our village, and God's servant Jeanne,' she said, and gave it to him with her hand."

If a square of Gobelin tapestry had emerged from the woods and hung itself across the gunwale of my canvas canoe it would not have been more surprising. I got my breath. "And the stirrup, what became of it?"

The boy shrugged his shoulders. "*Sais pas,*" he answered with French nonchalance. "One does not know that. It is a long time, M'sieur le Docteur. It was lost, that stirrup, some years ago. It may be a hundred years. It may be two hundred. My grandfather, he who keeps the grocery shop, has told me that there is a saying that a Martel must go to France to find the silver stirrup. In every case I do not know. It is my wish to fight for France, but as for the stirrup or

Jeanne—*sais pas.*" Another shrug. With that he was making oration, his light eyes flashing, his dark face working with feeling, about the bitterness of being a cripple, and unable to go into the army.

"It is not *comme il faut*, M'sieur le Docteur, that a man whose very grandfather fought for Jeanne should fail France now in her need. Jeanne, one knows, was the saviour of France. Is it not?" I agreed. "It is my inheritance, therefore, to fight as my ancient grandfather fought." I looked at the lame boy, not knowing the repartee. He began again. "Also I am the only one of the family proper to go, except Adolphe, who is not very proper, having had a tree to fall on the lungs and leave him liable to fits; and also Jacques and Louis are too young, and Jean Baptiste he is blind of one eye, God knows. So it is I who fail! I fail! Jesus Christ! To stay at home like a coward when France needs men!"

"But you are Canadian, Philippe. Your people have been here two hundred years."

"M'sieur, I am of France. I belong there with

the fighting men." His look was a flame, and suddenly I knew why he was firing off hot shot at me. I am a surgeon.

"What's the matter with your leg?" I asked.

The brilliant eyes flashed. "Ah!" he brought out. "One hoped—if M'sieur le Docteur would but see. I may be cured. To be straight—to march!" He was trembling.

Later, in the shifting sunshine at the camp door, with the odors of hemlocks and balsams about us, the lake rippling below, I had an examination. I found that the lad's lameness was a trouble to be cured easily by an operation. I hesitated. Was it my affair to root this youngster out of safety and send him to death in the *débâcle* over there? Yet what right had I to set limits? He wanted to offer his life; how could I know what I might be blocking if I withheld the cure? My job was to give strength to all I could reach.

"Philippe," I said, "if you'll come to New York next month I'll set you up with a good leg."

In September, 1915, Dick and I came up for our yearly trip, but Philippe was not with us.

Philippe, after drilling at Valcartier, was drilling in England. I had lurid post cards off and on; after a while I knew that he was "somewhere in France." A grim gray card came with no postmark, no writing but the address and Philippe's labored signature; for the rest there were printed sentences: "I am well. I am wounded. I am in hospital. I have had no letter from you lately." All of which was struck out but the welcome words, "I am well." So far then I had not cured the lad to be killed. Then for weeks nothing. It came to be time again to go to Canada for the hunting. I wrote the steward to get us four men, as usual, and Lindsley and I alighted from the rattling train at the club station in September, 1916, with a mild curiosity to see what Fate had provided as guides, philosophers and friends to us for two weeks. Paul Sioui—that was nice—a good fellow Paul; and Josef—I shook hands with Josef; the next face was a new one—ah, Pierre Beauramé —one calls one's self that—*on s' appelle comme ça. Bon jour!* I turned, and got a shock. The fourth face, at which I looked, was the face of

Philippe Martel. I looked, speechless. And with that the boy laughed. "It is that M'sieur cannot again cure my leg," answered Philippe, and tapped proudly on a calf which echoed with a wooden sound.

"You young cuss," I addressed him savagely. "Do you mean to say you have gone and got shot in that very leg I fixed up for you?"

Philippe rippled more laughter—of pure joy—of satisfaction. "But, yes, M'sieur le Docteur, that leg *même*. Itself. In a battle. M'sieur le Docteur gave me the good leg for a long enough time to serve France. It was all that there was of necessary. As for now I may not fight again, but I can walk and portage *comme il faut*. I am *capable* as a guide. Is it not, Josef?" He appealed, and the men crowded around to back him up with deep, serious voices.

"Ah, yes, M'sieur."

"*B'en capable!*"

"He can walk like us others—the same!" they assured me impressively.

Philippe was my guide this year. It was the

morning after we reached camp. "Would M'sieur le Docteur be too busy to look at something?"

I was not. Philippe stood in the camp doorway in the patch of sunlight where he had sat two years before when I looked over his leg. He sat down again in the shifting sunshine, the wooden leg sticking out straight and pathetic, and began to take the covers off a package. There were many covers; the package was apparently valuable. As he worked at it the odors of hemlock and balsam, distilled by hot sunlight, rose sweet and strong, and the lake splashed on pebbles, and peace that passes understanding was about us.

"It was in a bad battle in Lorraine," spoke Philippe into the sunshiny peace, "that I lost M'sieur le Docteur's leg. One was in the front trench and there was word passed to have the wire cutters ready, and also bayonets, for we were to charge across the open towards the trenches of the Germans—perhaps one hundred and fifty yards, eight *arpents*—acres—as we say in Canada. Our big guns back did the preparation, making what M'sieur le Docteur well knows is called a *rideau*—

a fire curtain. We climbed out of our trench with a shout and followed the fire curtain; so closely we followed that it seemed we should be killed by our own guns. And then it stopped—too soon, M'sieur le Docteur. Very many Boches were left alive in that trench in front, and they fired as we came, so that some of us were hit, and so terrible was the fire that the rest were forced back to our own trench which we had left. It is so sometimes in a fight, M'sieur le Docteur. The big guns make a little mistake, and many men have to die. Yet it is for France. And as I ran with the others for the shelter of the trench, and as the Boches streamed out of their trench to make a counter attack with hand-grenades I tripped on something. It was little Réné Dumont, whom M'sieur le Docteur remembers. He guided for our camp when Josef was ill in the hand two years ago. In any case he lay there, and I could not let him lie to be shot to pieces. So I caught up the child and ran with him across my shoulders and threw him in the trench, and as he went in there was a cry behind me, 'Philippe!'

"I turned, and one waved arms at me—a comrade whom I did not know very well—but he lay in the open and cried for help. So I thought of Jeanne d'Arc, and how she had no fear, and was kind, and with that, back I trotted to get the comrade. But at that second—pouf!—a big noise, and I fell down and could not get up. It was the good new leg of M'sieur le Docteur which those *sacrés* Boches had blown off with a hand-grenade. So that I lay dead enough. And when I came alive it was dark, and also the leg hurt—but yes! I was annoyed to have ruined that leg which you gave me—M'sieur le Docteur."

I grinned, and something ached inside of me.

Philippe went on. "It was then, when I was without much hope and weak and in pain and also thirsty, that a thing happened. It is a business without pleasure, M'sieur le Docteur, that—to lie on a battle-field with a leg shot off, and around one men dead, piled up—yes, and some not dead yet, which is worse. They groan. One feels unable to bear it. It grows cold also, and the searchlights of the Boches play so as to prevent rescue by com-

rades. They seem quite horrible, those lights. One lives, but one wishes much to die. So it happened that, as I lay there, I heard a step coming, not crawling along as the rescuers crawl and stopping when the lights flare, but a steady step coming freely. And with that I was lifted and carried quickly into a wood. There was a hole in the ground there, torn by a shell deeply, and the friend laid me there and put a flask to my lips, and I was warm and comforted. I looked up and I saw a figure in soldier's clothing of an old time, such as one sees in books—armor of white. And the face smiled down at me. 'You will be saved,' a voice said, and the words sounded homely, almost like the words of my grandfather who keeps the grocery shop. 'You will be saved.' It seemed to me that the voice was young and gentle and like a woman's.

" 'Who are you?' I asked, and I had a strange feeling, afraid a little M'sieur, yet glad to a marvel. I got no answer to my question, but I felt something pressed into my hand, and then I spoke, but I suppose I was a little delirious, M'sieur, for

I heard myself say a thing I had not been thinking. 'A Martel must return to France to find the silver stirrup'—I said that, M'sieur. Why I do not know. They were the words I had heard my grandfather speak. Perhaps the hard feeling in my hand—but I cannot explain, M'sieur le Docteur. In any case, there was all at once a great thrill through my body, such as I have never known. I sat up quickly and stared at the figure. It stood there. M'sieur will probably not believe me—the figure stood there in white armor, with a sword—and I knew it for Jeanne—the Maid. With that I knew no more. When I woke it was day. I was still lying in the crater of the shell which had torn up the earth of a very old battlefield, but in my hand I held tight—this."

Philippe drew off the last cover with a dramatic flourish and opened the box which had been wrapped so carefully. I bent over him. In the box, before my eyes, lay an ancient worn and battered silver stirrup. There were no words to say. I stared at the boy. And with that suddenly he had slewed around clumsily—because of his poor

wooden leg—and was on his knees at my feet. He held out the stirrup.

"M'sieur le Docteur, you gave me a man's chance and honor, and the joy of fighting for France. I can never tell my thanks. I have nothing to give you—but this. Take it, M'sieur le Docteur. It is not much, yet to me the earth holds nothing so valuable. It is the silver stirrup of Jeanne d'Arc. It is yours."

* * *

In a glass case on the wall of my library hangs an antique bit of harness which is my most precious piece of property. How its story came about I do not even try to guess. As Philippe said the action of that day took place on a very old battle-field. The shell which made the sheltering crater doubtless dug up earth untouched for hundreds of years. That it should have dug up the very object which was a tradition in the Martel family and should have laid it in the grasp of a Martel fighting for France with that tradition at the bottom of his mind seems incredible. The story

of the apparition of the Maid is incredible to laughter, or tears. No further light is to be got from the boy, because he believes his story. I do not try to explain. I place the episode in my mind alongside other things incredible, things lovely and spiritual, and, to our viewpoint of five years ago, things mad. Many such have risen luminous, undesirable, unexplained, out of these last horrible years, and wait human thought, it may be human development, to be classified. I accept and treasure the silver stirrup as a pledge of beautiful human gratitude. I hold it as a visible sign that French blood keeps a loyalty to France which ages and oceans may not weaken.

THE RUSSIAN

THE RUSSIAN

THE little dinner-party of grizzled men strayed from the dining-room and across the hall into the vast library, arguing mightily.

"The great war didn't do it. World democracy was on the way. The war held it back."

It was the United States Senator, garrulous and incisive, who issued that statement. The Judge, the host, wasted not a moment in contradicting. "You're mad, Joe," he threw at him with a hand on the shoulder of the man who was still to him that promising youngster, little Joe Burden of The School. "Held back democracy! The war! Quite mad, my son."

The guest of the evening, a Russian General who had just finished five strenuous years in the Cabinet of the Slav Republic, dropped back a step to watch, with amused eyes, strolling through the doorway, the two splendid old boys, the Judge's arm around the Senator's shoulders, fighting, sput-

tering, arguing with each other as they had fought and argued forty odd years up to date.

Two minutes more and the party of six had settled into deep chairs, into a mammoth davenport, before a blazing fire of spruce and birch. Cigars, liqueurs, coffee, the things men love after dinner, were there; one had the vaguest impression of two vanishing Japanese persons who might or might not have brought trays and touched the fire and placed tiny tables at each right hand; an atmosphere of completeness was present, one did not notice how. One settled with a sigh of satisfaction into comfort, and chose a cigar. One laughed to hear the Judge pound away at the Senator.

"It's all a game." Dr. Rutherford turned to the Russian. "They're devoted old friends, not violent enemies, General. The Senator stirs up the Judge by taking impossible positions and defending them savagely. The Judge invariably falls into the trap. Then a battle. Their battles are the joy of the Century Club. The Senator doesn't believe for an instant that the war held back democracy."

At that the Senator whirled. "I don't? But I do.—Don't *smoke* that cigar, Rutherford, on your life. Peter will have these atrocities. Here —Kaki, bring the doctor the other box.—That's better.—I don't believe what I said? Now listen. How could the fact that the world was turned into a military camp, officers commanding, privates obeying, rank, rank, rank everywhere throughout mankind, how could that fail to hinder democracy, which is in its essence the leveling of ranks? Tell me that!"

The doctor grinned at the Russian. "What about it, General? What do you think?"

The General answered slowly, with a small accent but in the wonderfully good English of an educated Russian. "I do not agree with the Senatorr," he stated, and five heads turned to listen. There was a quality of large personality in the burr of the voice, in the poise and soldierly bearing, in the very silence of the man, which made his slow words of importance. "I believe indeed that the Sena-torr is partly—shall I say speaking for argumer.t?"

The Senator laughed.

"The great war, in which all of us here had the honor to bear arms—that death grapple of tyranny against freedom—it did not hold back the cause of humanity, of democracy, that war. Else thousands upon thousands of good lives were given in vain."

There was a hushed moment. Each of the men, men now from fifty to sixty years old, had been a young soldier in that Homeric struggle. Each was caught back at the words of the Russian to a vision of terrible places, of thundering of great guns, of young, generous blood flowing like water. The deep, assured tones of the Russian spoke into the solemn pause.

"There is an episode of the war which I remember. It goes to show, so far as one incident may, where every hour was crowded with drama, how forces worked together for democracy. It is the story of a common man of my country who was a private in the army of your country, and who was lifted by an American gentleman to hope and opportunity, and, as God willed it, to honor. My

old friend the Judge can tell that episode better than I. My active part in it was small. If you like"—the dark foreign eyes flashed about the group—"if you like I should much enjoy hearing my old friend review that little story of democracy."

There was a murmur of approval. One man spoke, a fighting parson he had been. "It argues democracy in itself, General, that a Russian aristocrat, the brother of a Duke, should remember so well the adventures of a common soldier."

The smouldering eyes of the Slav turned to the speaker and regarded him gravely. "I remember those adventures well," he answered.

The Judge, flung back in a corner of the davenport, his knees crossed and rings from his cigar ascending, stared at the ceiling. "Come along, Peter. You're due to entertain us," the Senator adjured him, and the Judge, staring upwards, began.

"This is the year 1947. It was in 1917 that the United States went into war—thirty years ago. The fifth of June, 1917, was set, as you remember,

for the registration of all men in the country over twenty-one and under thirty-one for the draft. I was twenty-three, living in this house with my father and mother, both dead before the war ended. Being outside of the city, the polling place where I was due to register was three miles off, at Hiawatha. I registered in the morning; the polls were open from seven A.M. to nine P.M. My mother drove me over, and the road was being mended, and, as happened in those days in the country, half a mile of it was almost impassable. There were no adjustable lift-roads invented then. We got through the ruts and stonework, but it was hard going, and we came home by a détour through the city rather than pass again that beastly half mile. That night was dark and stormy, with rain at intervals, and as we sat in this room, reading, the three of us—" The Judge paused and gazed a moment at the faces in the lamplight, at the chairs where his guests sat. It was as if he called back to their old environment for a moment the two familiar figures which had belonged here, which had gone out of his life. "We sat in this

room, the three of us," he repeated, "and the butler came in.

" 'If you please, sir, there's a young man here who wants to register,' he said.

" 'Wants to register!' my father threw at him. 'What do you mean?'

"We all went outside, and there we found not one, but five boys, Russians. There was a munitions plant a mile back of us and the lads worked there, and had wakened to the necessity of registering at the last moment, being new in the country and with little English. They had directions to go to the same polling place as mine, Hiawatha, but had gotten lost, and, seeing our lights, brought up here. Hiawatha, as I said, is three miles away. It was eight-thirty and the polls closed at nine. We brought the youngsters inside, and I dashed to the garage for the car and piled the delighted lads into it and drove them across.

"At least I tried to. But when we came to the bad half mile the car rebelled at going the bit twice in a day, and the motor stalled. There we were—eight-forty-five P.M.—polls due to close

at nine—a year's imprisonment for five well-meaning boys for neglecting to register. I was in despair. Then suddenly one of the boys saw a small red light ahead, the tail light of an automobile. We ran along and found a big car standing in front of a house. As we got there, out from the car stepped a woman with a lantern, and as the light swung upward I saw that she was tall and fair and young and very lovely. She stopped as the six of us loomed out of the darkness. I knew that a professor from the University in town had taken this house for the summer, but I don't know the people or their name. It was no time to be shy. I gave my name and stated the case.

"The girl looked at me. 'I've seen you,' she said. 'I know you are Mr. McLane. I'll drive you across. One moment, till I tell my mother.'

"She was in the house and out again without wasting a second, and as she flashed into the car I heard a gasp, and I turned and saw in the glare of the headlights as they sprang on one of my Russians, a gigantic youngster of six feet four or so, standing with his cap off and his head bent, as

he might have stood before a shrine, staring at the spot where the girl had disappeared into the car. Then the engine purred and my squad tumbled in.

"We made the polls on the tap of nine. Afterwards we drove back to my car and among us, with the lantern, we got the motor running again, the girl helping efficiently. The big fellow, when we told her good-night, astonished me by dropping on his knees and kissing the edge of her skirt. But I put it down to Slavic temperament and took it casually. I've learned since what Russian depth of feeling means—and tenacity of purpose. There was one more incident. When I finally drove the lads up to their village the big chap, who spoke rather good English when he spoke at all, which was seldom, invited me to have some beer. I was tired and wanted to get home, so I didn't. Then the young giant excavated in his pocket and brought out a dollar bill.

" 'You get beer tomorrow.' And when I laughed and shoved it back he flushed. 'Excuse—Mr. Sir,' he said. 'I make mistake.' Suddenly he drew himself up—about to the treetops, it looked, for he

was a huge, a magnificent lad. He tossed out his arm to me. 'Some day,' he stated dramatically, 'I do two things. Some day I give Mr. Sir somethings more than dollar—and he will take. And—some day I marry—Miss Angel!'

"You may believe I was staggered. But I simply stuck out my fist and shook his and said: 'Good. No reason on earth why a fellow with the right stuff shouldn't get anywhere. It's a free country.' And the giant drew his black brows together and remarked slowly: 'All countries—world—is to be free. War will sweep up kings—and other—rubbish. I—shall be—a man.'

"Besides his impressive build, the boy had—had—" the Judge glanced at the Russian General, whose eyes glowed at the fire. "The boy had a remarkable face. It was cut like a granite hill, in sweeping masses. All strength. His eyes were coals. I went home thoughtful, and the Russian boy's intense face was in my mind for days, and I told myself many times that he not only would be, but already was, a man.

"Events quickstepped after that. I got to

France within the year, and, as you remember, work was ready. It was perhaps eighteen months after that registration day, June fifth, which we keep so rightly now as one of our sacred days, that one morning I was in a fight. Our artillery had demoralized the enemy at a point and sent them running. There was one machine gun left working in the Hun trenches—doing a lot of damage. Suddenly it jammed. I was commanding my company, and I saw the chance, but also I saw a horrid mess of barbed wire. So I just ran forward a bit and up to the wire and started clipping, while that machine gun stayed jammed. Out of the corner of an eye I could see men rushing towards it in the German trench, and I knew I had only a moment before they got it firing again. Then, as I leaped far forward to reach a bit of entanglement, my foot slipped in a puddle and as I sprawled I saw our uniform and a dead American boy's face under me, and I fell headlong in his blood over him and into a bunch of wire. And couldn't get up. The wire held like the devil. I got more tied up at every pull. And my clippers

had fallen from my hand and landed out of reach.

"'It's good night for me,' I thought, and was aware of a sharp regret. To be killed because of a nasty bit of wire! I had wanted to do a lot of things yet. With that something leaped, and I saw clippers flashing close by. A big man was cutting me loose, dragging me out, setting me on my feet. Then the roar of an exploding shell; the man fell—fell into the wire from which he had just saved me. There was no time to consider that; somehow I was back and leading my men—and then we had the trenches.

"The rest of that day was confusion, but we won a mile of earthworks, and at night I remembered the incident of the wire and the man who rescued me. By a miracle I found him in the field hospital. His head was bandaged, for the bit of shell had scraped his cheek and jaw, but his eyes were safe, and something in the glance out of them was familiar. Yet I didn't know him till he drew me over and whispered painfully, for it hurt him to talk:

"'Yester—day I did—give Mr. Sir somethings more than dollar. And he did—take it.'

"Then I knew the big young Russian of registration day who had tried to tip me. Bless him! I got him transferred to my command and—" the Judge hesitated a bit and glanced at his distinguished guest. One surmised embarrassment in telling the story of the General's humble compatriot.

The General rose to his feet and stood before the fire facing the handful of men. "I can continue this anecdote from the point that is more easily than my friend the Judge," spoke the General. "I was in the confidence of that countryman of mine. I know. It was so that after he had been thus slightly useful to my friend the Judge, who was the Captain McLane at that time—"

The Judge broke in with a shout of deep laughter worthy of a boy of eighteen. "He 'slightly obliged me by saving my life." The American threw that into the Russian's smooth sentences. "I put that fact before the jury."

The four men listening laughed also, but the

Russian held up a hand and went on gravely: "It was quite simple, that episode, and the man's pleasure. I knew him well. But what followed was not ordinary. The Captain McLane saw to it that the soldier had his chance. He became an officer. He went alive through the war, and at the end the Captain McLane made it possible that he should be educated. His career was a gift from the Captain McLane—from my friend the Judge to that man, who is now—" the finished sentence halted a mere second—"who is now a responsible person of Russia.

"And it is the incident of that sort, it is that incident itself which I know, which leads me to combat—" he turned with a deep bow—"the position of the Sena-torr that the great war did not make for democracy. Gentlemen, my compatriot was a peasant, a person of ignorance, yet with a desire of fulfilling his possibilities. He had been born in social chains and tied to most sordid life, beyond hope, in old Russia. To try to shake free he had gone to America. But it was that caldron of fire, the war, which freed him, which fused

his life and the life of the Captain McLane, so different in opportunity, and burned from them all trivialities and put them, stark-naked of advantages and of drawbacks artificial, side by side, as two lives merely. It made them—brothers. One gave and the other took as brothers without thought of false pride. They came from the furnace men. Both. Which is democracy—a chance for a tree to grow, for a flame to burn, for a river to flow; a chance for a man to become a man and not rest a vegetable anchored to the earth as—Oh, God!—for many centuries the Russian mujiks have rested. It is that which I understand by democracy. Freedom of development for everything which wants to develop. It was the earthquake of war which broke chains, loosened dams, cleared the land for young forests. It was war which made Russia a republic, which threw down the kingships, which joined common men and princes as comrades. God bless that liberating war! God grant that never in all centuries may this poor planet have another! God save democracy—humanity! Does the Sena-torr yet believe

that the great war retarded democracy?" The Russian's brilliant, smouldering eyes swept about, inquiring.

There was a hush in the peaceful, firelit, lamplit room. And with that, as of one impulse, led by the Senator, the five men broke into handclapping. Tears stood in eyes, faces were twisted with emotion; each of these men had seen what the thing was—war; each knew what a price humanity had paid for freedom. Out of the stirring of emotion, out of the visions of trenches and charges and blood and agony and heroism and unselfishness and steadfastness, the fighting parson, he who had bent, under fire, many a day over dying men who waited his voice to help them across the border—the parson led the little company from the intense moment to commonplace.

"You haven't quite finished the story, General. The boy promised to do two things. He did the first; he gave the Judge 'something more than a dollar,' and the Judge took it—his life. But he said also he was going to marry—what did he call her?—Miss Angel. How about that?"

The Russian General, standing on the hearth-rug, appeared to draw himself up suddenly with an access of dignity, and the Judge's boyish big laugh broke into the silence. "Tell them, Michael," said the Judge. "You've gone so far with the fairy story that they have a right to know the crowning glory of it. Tell them."

And suddenly the men sitting about noticed with one accord what, listening to the General's voice, they had not thought about—that the Russian was uncommonly tall—six feet four perhaps; that his face was carved in sweeping lines like a granite hillside, and that an old, long scar stretched from the vivid eyes to the mouth. The men stared, startled with a sudden simultaneous thought. The Judge, watching, smiled. Slowly the General put his hand into the breast pocket of his evening coat; slowly he drew out a case of dark leather, tooled wonderfully, set with stones. He opened the case and looked down; the strong face changed as if a breeze and sunshine passed over a mountain. He glanced up at the men waiting.

"I am no Duke's brother," he said, smiling, suddenly radiant. "That is a mistake of the likeness of a name, which all the world makes. I am born a mujik of Russia. But you, sir," and he turned to the parson, "you wish an answer of 'Miss Angel,' as the big peasant boy called that lovely spirit, so far above him in that night, so far above him still, and yet, God be thanked, so close today! Yes? Then this is my answer." He held out the miniature set with jewels.

ROBINA'S DOLL

ROBINA'S DOLL

MASSIVE, sprawling, uncertain writing, two sentences to the page; a violent slant in the second line, down right, balanced by a drastic lessening of the letters, up right, in the line underneath; spelling not as advised in the Century Dictionary —a letter from Robina, aged eight. Robina's Aunt Evelyn, sitting in her dress and cap of a Red Cross nurse in the big base hospital in Paris, read the wandering, painstaking, very unsuccessful literary effort, laughing, half-crying, and kissed it enthusiastically.

"The darling baby! She shall have her doll if it takes——" Aunt Evelyn stopped thoughtfully.

It would take something serious to buy and equip the doll that Robina, with eight-year-old definiteness, had specified. The girl in the Red Cross dress read the letter over.

"Dear Aunt Evelyn," began Robina and struck no snags so far. "I liked your postcard so much."

(The facilis descensus to an averni of literature began with a swoop down here. "Mother is wel. Fother is wel. The baby is wel. The dog has sevven kitens." (Robina robbed Peter to pay Paul habitually in her spelling.) "Fother sais they lukk like choklit eclares. I miss you, dere Aunt Evelyn, because I lov you sew. I hope Santa Claus wil bring me a doll. I want a very bigg bride doll with a vale and flours an a trunk of close, and all her under-close to buton and unboton and to have pink ribons run into. I don't want anythig sode on. Come home, Aunt Evelyn, becaus I miss you. But if the poor wundead soljers ned you then don't come. But as soone as you can come to yure loving own girl—ROBINA."

The dear angel! Every affectionate, labored word was from the warm little heart; Evelyn Bruce knew that. She sat, smiling, holding the paper against her, seeing a vision of the faraway, beloved child who wrote it. She saw the dancing, happy brown eyes and the shining, cropped head of pale golden brown, and the straight, strong little figure; she heard the merry, ready giggle and

the soft, slow tones that were always full of love to her. Robina, her sister's child, her own god-daughter had been her close friend from babyhood, and between them there was a bond of understanding which made nothing of the difference in years. Darling little Robina! Such a good, unspoiled little girl, for all of the luxury and devotion that surrounded her!

But—there was a difficulty just there. Robina was unspoiled indeed, yet, as the children of the very rich, she was, even at eight, sophisticated in a baby way. She had been given too many grand dolls not to know just the sort she wanted. She did not know that what she wanted cost money, but she knew the points desired—and they did cost money. Aunt Evelyn had not much money.

"This one extravagant thing I will do," said Evelyn Bruce, "and I'll give up my trip to England next week, and I'll do it in style. Robina won't want dolls much longer and this time she's got to have her heart's desire."

Which was doubtless foolish, yet when one is separated by an ocean and a war from one's own,

it is perhaps easier to be foolish for a child's face and a child's voice, and love sent across the sea. So Evelyn Bruce wrote a letter to her cousin in England saying that she could not come to her till after Christmas. Then she went out into Paris and ordered the doll, and reveled in the ordering, for a very gorgeous person indeed it was, and worthy to journey from Paris to a little American. It was to be ready in just two weeks, and Miss Bruce was to come in and look over the fine lady and her equipment as often as desired, before she started on her ocean voyage.

"It would simply break my heart if she were torpedoed."

Evelyn confided that, childlike, to the black-browed, stout Frenchwoman who took a personal interest in every "buton," and then she opened her bag and brought out Robina's photograph, standing, in a ruffled bonnet, her solemn West Highland White terrier dog in her arms, on the garden path of "Graystones" between tall foxgloves. And the Frenchwoman tossed up enraptured hands at the beauty of the little girl who

was to get the doll, and did not miss the great, splendid house in the background, or the fact that the dog was of a "*chic*" variety.

The two weeks fled, every day full of the breathless life—and death—of a hospital in war-torn France. Every day the girl saw sights and heard sounds which it seemed difficult to see and hear and go on living, but she moved serene through such an environment, because she could help. Every day she gave all that was in her to the suffering boys who were carried, in a never-ending stream of stretchers, into the hospital. And the strength she gave flowed back to her endlessly from, she could not but believe it, the underlying source of all strength, which stretches beneath and about us all, and from which those who give greatly know how to draw.

Two or three times, during the two weeks, Evelyn had gone in to inspect the progress of Robina's doll, and spent a happy and lighthearted quarter of an hour with friendly Madame of the shop, deciding the color of the lady's party coat, and of the ribbons in her minute under-

clothes, and packing and repacking the trunk with enchanting fairy foolishnesses. Again and again she smiled to herself, in bed at night, going about her work in the long days, as she thought of the little girl's rapture over the many and carefully planned details. For, with all the presents showered on her, Robina's aunt knew that Robina had never had anything as perfect as this exquisite Paris doll and her trousseau.

The day came on which Evelyn was to make her final visit to "La Marquise," as Madame called the doll, and the nurse was needed in the hospital and could not go. But she telephoned Madame and made an appointment for tomorrow.

"'La Marquise' finds herself quite ready for the voyage," Madame spoke over the telephone. "She is all which there is of most lovely; Paris itself has never seen a so ravishing doll. I say it. We wait anxiously to greet Mademoiselle, I and La Marquise," Madame assured her. Evelyn, laughing with sheer pleasure, made an engagement for the next day, without fail, and went back to her work.

There was a badly wounded *poilu* in her ward, whom the girl had come to know well. He was young, perhaps twenty-seven, and his warm brown eyes were full of a quality of gentleness which endeared him to everyone who came near him. He was very grateful, very uncomplaining, a simple-minded, honest, common, young peasant, with a charm uncommon. The unending bright courage with which he made light of cruel pain, was almost more than Evelyn, used as she was to brave men's pain, could bear. He could not get well—the doctors said that—and it seemed that he could not die.

"If Corporal Duplessis might die," Evelyn spoke to the surgeon.

He answered, considering: "I don't see what keeps him alive."

"I believe," said Evelyn, "there's something on his mind. He sighs constantly. Broken-heartedly. I believe he can't die until his mind is relieved."

"It may be that," agreed Dr. Norton. "You could help him if you could get him to tell you."

And moved on to the next shattered thing that had been, so lately, a strong, buoyant boy.

Evelyn went back to Duplessis and bent over him and spoke cheerful words; he smiled up at her with quick French responsiveness, and then sighed the heavy, anxious sigh which had come to be part of him. With that the girl took his one good hand and stroked it. "If you could tell the American Sister what it is," she spoke softly, "that troubles your mind, perhaps I might help you. We Americans, you know," and she smiled at him, "we are wonderful people. We can do all sorts of magic—and I want to help you to rest, so much. I'd do anything to help you. Won't you tell me what it is that bothers?" Evelyn Bruce's voice was winning, and Duplessis' eyes rested on her affectionately.

"But how the Sister understands one!" he said. "It is true that there is a trouble. It hinders me to die"—and the heavy sigh swept out again. "It would be a luxury for me—dying. The pain is bad, at times. Yet the Sister knows I am glad to have it, for France. Ah, yes! But—if I might

be released. Yet the thought of what I said to her keeps me from dying always."

"What you said 'to her,' corporal?" repeated Evelyn. "Can't you tell me what it was? I would try so hard to help you. I might perhaps."

"Who knows?" smiled the corporal. "It is true that Americans work magic. And the Sister is of a goodness! But yes. Yet the Sister may laugh at me, for it is a thing entirely childish, my trouble."

"I will not laugh at you, Corporal," said Evelyn, gravely, and felt something wring her heart.

"If—then—if the Sister will not think it foolish—I will tell." The Sister's answer was to stroke his fingers. "It is my child, my little girl," Duplessis began in his deep, weak tones. "It was to her I made the promise."

"What promise?" prompted Evelyn softly, as he stopped.

"One sees," the deep voice began again, "that when I told them goodbye, the mother and Marie my wife, and the *petite*, who has five years, then

I started away, and would not look back, because I could not well bear it, Sister. And suddenly, as I strode to the street from our cottage, down the brick walk, where there are roses and also other flowers, on both sides—suddenly I heard a cry. And it was the voice of little Jeanne, the *petite*. I turned at that sound, for I could not help it, Sister, and between the flowers the little one came running, and as I bent she threw her arms about my neck and held me so tight, tight that I could not loosen the little hands, not without hurting her. 'I will not let you go—I will not let you go.' She cried that again and again. Till my heart was broken. But all the same, one had to go. One was due to join the comrades at the station, and the time was short. So that, immediately, I had a thought. 'My most dear,' I spoke to her. 'If thou wilt let me go, then I promise to send thee a great, beautiful doll, all in white, as a bride, like the cousin Annette at her wedding last week.' And then the clinging little hands loosened, and she said, wondering—for she is but a baby—'Wilt thou promise, my

father?' And I said, 'Yes,' and kissed her quickly, and went away. So that now that I am wounded and am to die, that promise which I cannot keep to my *petite*, that promise hinders me to die."

The deep, sad voice stopped and the honest eyes of the peasant boy looked up at Evelyn, burning with the pain of his body and of his soul. And as Evelyn looked back, holding his hand and stroking it, it was as if the furnace of the soldier's pain melted together all the things she had ever cared to do. Yet it was a minute before she spoke.

"Corporal," she said, "your little girl shall have her doll. I will take it to her and tell her that her father sent it. Will you lie very still while I go and get the doll?"

The brown eyes looked up at her astounded, radiant, and the man caught the hem of her white veil and kissed it. "But the Americans—they do magic. You shall see, Sister, if I shall be still. I will not die before the Sister returns. It is a joy unheard of."

The girl ran out of the hospital and away into

Paris, and burst upon Madame. Somehow she told the story in a few words, and Madame was crying as she laid "La Marquise" in a box.

"It is Mademoiselle who is an angel of the good God," she whispered, and kissed Evelyn unexpectedly on both cheeks.

Corporal Duplessis lay, waxen, starry-eyed, as the American Sister came back into the ward. His look was on her as she entered the far-away door, and he saw the box in her arms. The girl knelt and drew out the gorgeous plaything and stood it by the side of the still, bandaged figure. An expression as of amazed radiance came into the fast-dimming eyes—into those large, brown, childlike eyes which had seen so little of the gorgeousness of earth. His hand stirred a very little—enough, for Evelyn quickly moved the gleaming satin train of the doll under the groping fingers. The eyes lifted to Evelyn's face and the smile in them was that of a prisoner who suddenly sees the gate of his prison opened and the fields of home beyond. It mattered little, one

may believe, to the welcoming hosts of heaven that the angel at the gate of release for the child-soul of Corporal Duplessis, the poilu, was only Robina's doll!

DUNDONALD'S DESTROYER

DUNDONALD'S DESTROYER

THIS is the year 1977. It will be objected that the episode I am going to tell, having happened in 1917, having been witnessed by twenty-odd thousand people, must have been, if true, for sixty years common property and an old tale. But when General Cochrane—who saved England at the end of the great war—told me the Kitchener incident of the story last year, sitting in the rose-garden of the White Hart Inn at Sonning-on-Thames, I had never heard of it.

I wonder why he told me. Probably, as is the case in most things which most people do, from a mixture of impulses. For one thing I am an American girl, with a fresher zest to hear tales of those titanic days than the people or the children of the people who lived through them. Also the great war of 1914 has stirred me since I was old enough to know about it, and I have read

everything concerning it which I could lay hands on, and talked to everyone who had knowledge of it. Also, General Cochrane and I made friends from the first minute. I was a quite unimportant person of twenty-four years, he a magnificent hero of eighty, one of the proud figures of England; it made me a bit dizzy when I saw that he liked me. One feels, once in a long time, an unmistakable double pull, and knows that oneself and another are friends, and not age, color, race nor previous condition of servitude makes the slightest difference. To have that happen with a celebrity, a celebrity whom it would have been honor enough simply to meet, is quite dizzying. This was the way of it.

I was staying with my cousin Mildred Ward, an Atlanta girl who married Sir Cecil Ward, an English baronet of Oxfordshire. I reached Martin-Goring on a day in July just in time to dress for dinner. When I came down, a bit early, Milly looked me over and pronounced favorably.

"You're not so hard to look at," she pronounced. "It takes an American really to wear

French clothes. I'm glad you're looking well tonight, because one of your heroes—Oh!"

She had floated inconsequently against a bookcase in a voyage along the big room, and a spray of wild roses from a vase on the shelf caught in her pretty gold hair.

"Oh—why does Middleton stick those catchy things up there?" she complained, separating the flowers from her hair, and I followed her eyes above the shelf.

"Why, that's a portrait of Kitchener—the old great Kitchener, isn't it?" I asked. "Did he belong to Cecil's people?"

"No," answered Milly, "only Cecil's grandfather and General Cochrane—or something—" her voice trailed. And then, "I've got somebody you'll be crazy about tonight, General Cochrane."

"General Cochrane?"

"Oh! You pretend to know about the great war and don't know General Cochrane, who saved England when the fleet was wrecked. Don't know him!"

"Oh!" I said again. "Know him? Know him!

I know every breath he drew. Only I couldn't believe my ears. The boy Donald Cochrane? It isn't true is it? How did you ever, ever——?"

"He lives five miles from us," said Milly, unconcernedly. "We see a lot of him. His wife was Cecil's great-aunt. She's dead now. His daughter is my best friend. 'The boy Donald Cochrane'!" She smiled a little. "He's no boy now. He's old. Even heroes do that—get old."

And with that the footman at the door announced "General Cochrane."

I stared away up at a very tall, soldierly old man with a jagged scar across his forehead. His wide-open, black-lashed gray eyes flashed a glance like a menace, like a sword, and then suddenly smiled as if the sun had jumped from a bank of storm-clouds. And I looked into those wonderful eyes and we were friends. As fast as that. Most people would think it nonsense, but it happened so. A few people will understand. He took me out to dinner, and it was as if no one else was at the table. I was aware only of the one heroic personality. At first I dared not speak of his

history, and then, without planning or intention, my own voice astonished my own ears. I announced to him:

"You have been my hero since I was ten years old."

It was a marvelous thing he did, the lad of twenty, even considering that the secret was there at his hand, ready for him to use. The histories say that—that no matter if he did not invent the device, it was his ready wit which remembered it, and his persistence which forced the war department to use it. Yes, and his heroism which led the ship and all but gave his life. And when he had fulfilled his mission he stepped back into the place of a subaltern; he was modest, even embarrassed, at the great people who thronged to him. England was saved; that was all his affair; nothing, so the books say, could prod him into prominence—though he rose to be a General later—after that, after being the first man in England for those days. It was this personage with whom I had gone out to dinner, and to whom I dared make that sudden speech: "You have

been my hero, General Cochrane, since I was ten years old."

He slued about with the menacing, shrapnel look, and it seemed that there might be an explosion of sharp-pointed small bullets over the dinner-table.

"Don't!" I begged. The sun came out; the artillery attack was over; he looked at me with boyish shyness.

"D'you know, when people say things like that I feel as if I were stealing," he told me confidentially. "Anybody else could have done all I did. In fact, it wasn't I at all," he finished.

"Not you? Who then? Weren't you the boy Donald Cochrane?"

"Yes," he said, and stopped as if he were considering it. "Yes," he said quietly in the clean-cut, terse English manner of speaking, "I suppose I was the boy Donald Cochrane." He gazed across the white lilacs and pink roses on the table as if dreaming a bit. Then he turned with a long breath. "My child," he said, "there is something about you which gives me back my

youth, and—the freshness of a great experience. I thank you."

I gazed into those compelling eyes, gasping like a fish with too much oxygen. I felt myself, Virginia Fox, meshed in the fringes of historic days, stirred by the rushing mighty wind of that Great Experience. I was awestruck into silence. Just then Milly got up, and eight women flocked into the library.

I was good for nothing there, simply good for nothing at all. I tried to talk to the nice, sensible English women, and I could not. I knew Milly was displeased with me for not keeping up my end, but I was sodden with thrills. I had sat through a dinner next to General Cochrane, the Donald Cochrane who was the most dramatic figure of the world war of sixty years ago. It has always moved me to meet persons who even existed at that time. I look at them and think what intense living it must have meant to pick up a paper and read—as the news of the day, mind you—that Germany had entered Belgium, that King Albert was fighting in the trenches, that Von

Kluck was within seventeen miles of Paris, that Von Kluck was retreating—think of the rapture of that—Paris saved! — that the Germans had taken Antwerp; that the *Lusitania* was sunk; that Kitchener was drowned at sea! I wonder if the people who lived and went about their business in America in those days realized that they were having a stage-box for the greatest drama of history? I wonder. Terror and heroism and cruelty and self-sacrifice on a scale which had never been dreamed, which will never, God grant, need to be dreamed on this poor little racked planet again. Of course, there are plenty of those people alive yet, and I've talked to many and they remember it, all of them remember well, even those who were quite small. And it has stirred me simply to look into the eyes of such an one and consider that those eyes read such things as morning news. The great war has had a hold on me since I first heard of it, and I distinctly remember the day, from my father, at the age of seven.

"Can you remember when it happened, father?" I asked him. And then: "Can you remember

when they drove old people out of their houses—and killed them?"

"Yes," said my father. And I burst into tears. And when I was not much older he told me about Donald Cochrane, the boy who saved England.

It was not strange to my own mind that I could not talk commonplaces now, when I had just spent an hour talking to the man who had been that historic boy—the very Donald Cochrane. I could not talk commonplaces.

Milly's leisurely voice broke my meditation. "I'm sorry that my cousin, Virginia Fox, should have such bad manners, Lady Andover," she was drawling. "She was brought up to speak when spoken to, but I think it's the General who has hypnotized her. Virginia, did you know that Lady Andover asked you—" And I came to life.

"It was Miss Fox who hypnotized the General, I fancy," said Lady Andover most graciously, considering I had overlooked her existence a second before. "He had a word for no one else during dinner." I felt myself go scarlet; it had pleased the Marvelous Person, then, to like me a

little, perhaps for the youth and enthusiasm in me.

With that the men straggled into the room and the tall grizzled head of my hero, his lined face conspicuous for the jagged, glorious scar, towered over the rest. I saw the vivid eyes flash about, and they met mine; I was staring at him, as I must, and my heart all but jumped out of me when he came straight to where I stood, my back against the bookcase.

"I was looking for you," he said simply.

Then he glanced over my head and his hand shot up in a manner of salute; I turned to see why. I was in front of the portrait of Lord Kitchener.

"Did you know him, General Cochrane?" I asked.

"Know him?" he demanded, and the gray glance plunged out at me from under the thick lashes.

"Don't do it," I pleaded, putting my hands over my eyes. "When you look at me so it's—bombs and bullets." The look softened, but the lean, wrinkled face did not smile.

"You asked if I knew Kitchener," he stated.

I spoke haltingly. "I didn't know. Ought I to have known?"

General Cochrane gazed down, all at once dreamy, as if he looked through me at something miles and æons away.

"No," he said. "There's no reason why you should. You have an uncommon knowledge of events of that time, an astonishing knowledge for a young thing, so that I forget you can't know—all of it." He stopped, as if considering. "It is because I am old that I have fancies," he went on slowly. "And you have understanding eyes. I have had a fancy this evening that you and I were meant to be friends; that a similarity of interests, a—a likeness—oh, hang it all!" burst out the General like a college boy. "I never could talk except straight and hot. I mean I've a feeling of a bond between us—you'll think me most presuming——"

I interrupted, breathless. "It's so," I whispered. "I felt it, only I'd not have dared—" and I choked.

Old General Cochrane frowned thoughtfully. "Curious," was what he said. "It's psychology of course, but I'm hanged if I know the explanation. However, since it's so, my child, I'm glad. A man as old as I makes few new friends. And a beautiful young woman — with a brain — and charm—and innocent eyes—and French clothes!"

One may guess if I tried to stop this description. I could have listened all night. With that:

"'Did I know Kitchener!' the child asked," reflected the General, and threw back his splendid head and laughed. I stared up, my heart pumping. Then, "Well, rather. Why, little Miss Fox—" and he stopped. "I've a mind to tell the child a fairy-story," he said. "A true fairy-story which is so extraordinary that few have been found to believe it, even of those who saw it happen."

He halted again.

"Tell me!"

General Cochrane looked about the roomful of people and tossed out his hand. "In this mob?" he objected. "It's too long a story in any case.

But why shouldn't you and I have a séance, to let a garrulous old fellow talk about his youth?" he demanded in his lordly way. "Why not come out on the river in my boat? They'll let you play about with an octogenarian, won't they?"

"I'll come," I answered the General eagerly.

"Very good. Tomorrow. Oh, by George, no. That confounded Prime Minister comes down to me tomorrow. I detest old men," said General Cochrane. "Well, then, the day after?"

The Thames was a picture-book river that day, gay with row-boats and punts and launches, yet serene for all its gaiety; slipping between grassy banks under immemorial trees with the air of a private stream wandering, protected, through an estate. The English have the gift above other nations of producing an atmosphere of leisure and seclusion, and surely there is no little river on earth so used and so unabused as the Thames. Of all the craft abroad that bright afternoon, General Cochrane's white launch with its gold line above the water and its gleaming brass trimmings was far and away the prettiest, and I was bursting

with pride as we passed the boat-house and file on the stream and they looked at us admiringly. To be alive on such a day in England was something; to be afloat on the silvery Thames was enchantment; to be in that lovely boat with General Cochrane, the boy Donald Cochrane, was a rapture not to be believed without one's head reeling. Yet here it was happening, the thing I should look back upon fifty, sixty years from now, an old gray woman, and tell my grandchildren as the most interesting event of my life. It was happening, and I was enjoying every second, and not in the least awed into misery, as is often the case with great moments. For the old officer was as perfect a playmate as any good-for-nothing young subaltern in England, and that is putting it strongly.

"Wouldn't it be nicer to land at Sonning and have our tea there?" he suggested. We were dropping through the lock just higher than the village; the wet, mossy walls were rising above us on both sides and the tops of the lock-keeper's gorgeous pink snapdragons were rapidly going

out of sight. [illegible] went on: "There's rather a nice rose-garden, and it's on the river, and the plum-cake's good. What do you think, that or on board?"

"The rose-garden," I decided.

Sonning is a village cut out of a book and pasted on the earth. It can't be true, it's so pretty. And the little White Hart Inn is adorable.

"Is it really three hundred years old?" I asked. "The standard roses look like an illustration out of 'Alice in Wonderland.' Yes, please—tea in the White Hart garden."

The old General heaved a sigh. "Thank Heaven," he said. "I was most awfully anxious for fear you'd say on the boat, and I didn't order any."

We slipped under an arch of the ancient red bridge and were at the landing. I remember the scene as we stood on shore and looked down the shining way of the river, the tall grasses bending on either side like green fur stroked by the breeze; I remember the trim sea-wall and velvet lawn, and the low, long house with leaded windows of the

place next the inn. A house-boat was moored to the shore below, white, with scarlet geraniums flowing the length of the upper deck, and willow chairs and tables; people were having tea up there; muslin curtains blew from the portholes below. Some Americans went past with two enormous Scotch deer-hound puppies on leash. "Be quiet, Jock," one of them said, and the big, gentle-faced beast turned on her with a giant, caressing bound, the last touch of beauty in the beautiful, quiet scene.

It was early, so that we took the table which pleased us, one set a bit aside against a ten-foot hedge, and guarded by a tall bush of tea-roses. A plump maid hurried across the lawn and spread a cloth on our table and waited, smiling, as if seeing us had simply made her day perfect. And the General gave the orders.

"The plum-cake is going to be wonderful," I said then, "and I'm hungry as a bear for tea. But the best thing I've been promised this afternoon is a fairy-story."

The shrapnel look flashed, keen and bright and

afire, but I looked back steadily, not afraid. I knew what sunlight was going to break; and it broke.

"D'you know," said he, "I'm really quite mad to talk about myself. Men always are. You've heard the little tale of the man who said, 'Let's have a garden-party. Let's go out on the lawn and talk about me'? One becomes a frightful bore quite easily. So that I've made rules—I don't hector people about—about things I've been concerned with. As to the incident I said I'd tell you, that would be quite impossible to tell to—well, practically anyone."

My circulatory system did a prance; he could tell it practically to no one, yet he was going to tell it to me! I instantly said that. "But you're going to tell it to me?" I was anxious.

"Child, you flatter well," said the Marvelous Person, who had brought me picnicking. "It's the American touch; there's a way with American women quite irresistible."

"Oh—American women!" I remonstrated.

"Yes, indeed. They're delightful — you're

witches, every mother's daughter of you. But you—ah—that's different, now. You and I, as we decided long ago, on day before yesterday, have a bond. I can't help the conviction that you're the hundred-thousandth person. You have understanding eyes. If I were a young man—And yet it's not just that; it's something a bit rarer. Moreover, they tell me there's a chap back in America."

"Yes," I owned. "There is a chap." And I persisted: "I'm to have a fairy-story?"

The black-lashed gaze narrowed as it traveled across the velvet turf and the tall roses, down the path of the quiet river. He had a fine head, thick-thatched and grizzled, not white; his nose was of the straight, short English type, slightly chopped up at the end—a good-looking nose; his mouth was wide and not chiseled, yet sensitive as well as strong; the jaw was powerful and the chin square with a marked dimple in it; there was also color, the claret and honey of English tanned complexions. Of course his eyes, with the exaggeratedly thick and long black lashes, were the wonderful,

part of him, but there is no describing the eyes. It was the look from them, probably, which made General Cochrane's face remarkable. I suppose it was partly that compelling look which had brought about his career. He was six feet four, lean and military, full of presence, altogether a conspicuously beautiful old lion in a land where every third man is beautiful.

"What are you looking munitions-of-war at, General, down the innocent little Thames River? You must be seeing around corners, past Wargrave, as far as Henley."

"I didn't see the Thames River," he shot at me in his masterful way. "I was looking at things past, and people dead and gone. We ancients do that. I saw London streets and crowds; I read the posters which told that Kitchener was drowned at sea, and then I saw, a year later, England in panic; I saw an almighty meeting in Trafalgar Square and I heard speeches which burned my ears—men urging Englishmen to surrender England and make terms with the Huns. Good God!" His fist came down on the rattling little iron table.

"My blood boils now when I remember. Child," he demanded, "I can't see why your alluring ways should have set me talking. Fancy, I've never told this tale but twice, and I'm holding forth to a little alien whom I haven't known two days, a young ne'er-do-well not born till forty years after the tale happened!"

"What difference does that make?" I asked. "Age means nothing to real people. And we've known each other since—since we hunted pterodactyls together, pre-historically. Only—I hate bats," I objected to my own arrangement. I went on: "If you knew how I want to hear! It's the most wonderful thing in my life, this afternoon—you."

"I know you are honest," he said. "Different from the ruck. I knew that the moment I saw you."

"Then," I prodded, "do begin with the posters about Lord Kitchener."

"But that's not the beginning," he protested. "You'll spoil it all," he said.

"Oh, no, then! Begin at the beginning. I didn't know. I wanted to get you started."

The gray eyes dreamed down the placid river water.

"The beginning was before I was born. It began when Kitchener, a young general, picked up a marauding party of black rascals on his way to Khartoum. They had a captive, a white girl, a lady. They had murdered her father and mother and young brother. The father was newly appointed Colonel of a regiment, traveling to his post with his family. The Arabs were saving the girl for their devilish head chieftain. Kitchener had the lot executed, and sent for the girl. She was——"

The old man's hand lifted to his head and he took off his hat and laid it on the ground.

"I cannot speak of that girl without uncovering," he said, quietly. "She was my mother." There was an electrical silence. I knew enough to know that no words fitted here. The old officer went on: "She was one of the wonderful people. What she seemed to think of, after the horrors she had gone through, was not herself or her suffering, but only to show her gratitude. It was

a long journey — weeks — through that land of hell, while she was in Kitchener's hands, and not once did she lose courage. The Sirdar told me that it was having an angel in camp—she held that rough soldiery in the hollow of her hand. She told Kitchener her story, and after that she would not talk of herself. You've heard that he never had a love affair? That's wrong. He was in love then, and for the rest of his life, with my mother."

I gasped. The shrapnel eyes menaced me.

"She could not speak of herself, d'you see? It was salvation to think only of others, so that she'd not told him that she was engaged to my father. Love from any other was the last thing she was thinking of. After what had happened she was living from one breath to another and she dared not consider her own affairs. The night before they reached Cairo, Kitchener asked her to marry him. He was over forty then; she was nineteen. She told him of her engagement, of course—told him also that it might be she would never marry at all; a life of her own and happi-

ness seemed impossible now. She might go into a sisterhood. Work for others was what she must have. Then, unexpectedly, my father was at Cairo to meet her, and Kitchener went to him and told him. From that on the two men were close friends. My people were not married till five years later, and when I came to be baptized General Kitchener was godfather. All my young days I was used to seeing him about the house at intervals, as if he belonged to us. I remember his eyes following my mother. Tall and slight she was, with a haunted look, from what she'd seen; she moved softly, spoke softly. It was no secret from the two, my father and mother, that he loved her always. Yet, so loyal, so crystal he was that my father had never one moment of jealousy. On the contrary they were like brothers. Then they died—my father and mother. The two almost together. I came into Kitchener's hands, Lord Kitchener by then. When he met me in London, a long lad of seventeen, he held my fingers a second and looked hard at me.

"'You're very like her, Donald,' he said. And

held on. And said it again. 'Your mother's double. I'd know you for her boy if I caught one look of your eyes, anywhere,' he said. 'Her boy.'— Well—what? Do I want more tea? Of course, I do."

For the smiling plump maid had long ago brought the steaming stuff, the bread and butter and jam and plum cake. I had officiated and General Cochrane had been absorbing his tea as an Englishman does, automatically, while he talked.

About us the tables were filling up, all over the rose-garden. The Americans were there with the beautiful long-legged giant deer-hound puppy, Jock, and were having trouble with his table manners. People came in by twos and threes and more, from the river, with the glow of exercise on their faces; an elderly country parson sat near, black-coated, white-collared, with his elderly daughter and their dog, a well-behaved Scottie this one, big-headed, with an age-old, wise, black face. And a group of three pretty girls with their pretty pink-cheeked mother and a young

man or so were having a gay time with soft-voiced laughter and jokes, not far away. The breeze lifted the long purple and rose-colored motor veils of mother and daughters. The whole place was full of bright colors and low-toned cheerful talk, yet so English was the atmosphere, that it was as if the General and I were shut into an enchanted forest. No one looked at us, no one seemed to know we were there. The General began to talk again, unconscious as the rest of anything or anybody not his affair.

"I got my commission in 1915 in K-1, Kitchener's first hundred thousand, and I went off to the front in the second year of the war. I had a scratch and was slightly gassed once, but nothing much happened for a long time. And in 1916, in May, came the news that my godfather, the person closest to me on earth, was drowned at sea. I was in London, just out of the hospital and about to go back to France."

The old General stopped and stared down at the graveled path with its trim turf border lying at his feet.

"It was to me as if the world, seething in its troubles, was suddenly empty—with that man gone. I drifted with the crowd about London town, and the crowd appeared to be like myself, dazed. The streets were full and there was continually a profound, sorrowful sound, like the groan of a nation; faces were blank and gray. Those surging, mournful London streets, and the look of the posters with great letters on them—his name—that memory isn't likely to leave me till I die. Of course, I got hold of every detail and tried to picture the manner of it to myself, but I couldn't get it that he was dead. Kitchener, the heart of the nation; I couldn't comprehend that he had stopped breathing. I couldn't get myself satisfied that I wasn't to see him again. It seemed there must be some way out. You'll remember, perhaps, that four boats were seen to put off from the *Hampshire* as she sank? I tried to trace those boats. I traveled up there and interviewed people who had seen them. I got no good from it. But it kept coming to me that it was not a mine that had sunk the ship, that it

was a torpedo from a German submarine, and that Kitchener was on one of the boats that put off and that he had been taken prisoner by the enemy. God knows why that thought persisted—there were reasons against it—it was a boy's theory. But it persisted; I couldn't get it out of my head. I was in St. Paul's at the Memorial Service; I heard the 'Last Post' played for him, and I saw the King and Queen in tears; all that didn't settle my mind. I went back to the front, heavy-hearted, and tried to behave myself as I believed he'd have had me—the Sirdar. My people had called him the Sirdar always. Luck was with me in France; I had chances, and did a bit of work, and got advancement."

"I know," I nodded. "I've read history. A few trifles like the rescue of the rifles and holding that trench and——"

The old soldier interrupted, looking thunderous. "It has a bearing on the episode I'm about to tell you. That's why I refer to it."

I didn't mind his haughtiness. It was given me to see the boy's shyness within that grim old hero.

"So that when I landed in London in 1917, having been stupid enough to get my right arm potted, it happened that my name was known. They picked me out to make a doing over. I was most uncommonly conspicuous for nothing more than thousands of other lads had done. They'd given their lives like water, thousands of them—it made me sick with shame, when I thought of those others, to have my name ringing through the land. But so it was, and it served a purpose, right enough, I saw later.

"Then, as I began to crawl about, came the crisis of the war. Ill news piled on ill news; the army in France was down with an epidemic; each day's news was worse than the last; to top all, the Germans found the fleet. It was in letters a foot long about London — newsboys crying awful words:

" 'Fleet discovered — German submarines and Zeppelins approaching.'

"A bit later, still worse. 'The *Bellerophon* sunk by German torpedo—ten dreadnoughts sunk—' There were the names of the big ships, the

Queen Elizabeth, the *Warspite*, the *Thunderer*, the *Agamemnon*, the *King Edward*—a lot more, battle cruisers, too—then ten more dreadnoughts—and more and worse every hour. The German navy was said to be coming into the North Sea and advancing to our coast. And our navy was going—gone—nothing to stand between us and the fate of Belgium.

"Then England went mad! I thank God I'll not live through such days again. The land went mad with fear. You'll remember that there had been a three-year strain which human nerves were not meant to bear. Well, there was a faction who urged that the only sane act now possible was to surrender to Germany quickly and hope for a mercy which we couldn't get if we struggled. The government, under enormous pressure, weakened. It's easy to cry 'Shame!' now, but how could it stand firm with the country stampeding back of it?

"So things were the day of the mass meeting in Trafalgar Square. I was tall, and so thin and gaunt that, with my uniform and my arm in its

sling, it was easy to get close to the front, straight under the speakers. And no sooner had I got there than I was seized with a restlessness, an uncontrollable desire to see my godfather—Kitchener. Only to see him, to lay eyes on him. I wish I might express to you the push of that feeling. It was thirst in a desert. With that spell on me I stood down in front of the stone lions and stared up at Nelson on his column, and listened to the speakers. They were mad, quite, those speakers. The crowd was mad, too. It overflowed that great space, and there were few steady heads in the lot. You'll realize it looked a bit of a close shave, with the German navy coming and our fleet being destroyed, no one knew how fast, and the army in France, and struck down by illness. At that moment it looked a matter of three or four days before the Huns would be landing. Never before in a thousand years was England as near the finish. As I stood there fidgeting, with the starvation on me for my godfather, it flashed to me that there's a legend in every nation about some one of its heroes, how in the hour of need he will come back to

save the people—Charlemagne in France, don't you know, and Barbarossa and King Arthur and—oh, a number. And I spoke aloud, so that the chap next prodded me in the ribs and said: 'Stop that, will you? I can't hear'—I spoke aloud and said:

" 'This is the hour. Come back and save us.'

"The speakers had been ranting along, urging on the people to force the government to give in and make terms with those devils who'd crushed Belgium. Of course there were plenty there ready to die in the last ditch for honor and the country, but the mob was with the speakers. Quite insane with terror the mob was. And I spoke aloud to Kitchener, like a madman of a sort also, begging him to come from another world and save his people.

" 'This is the hour; come and save us,' said I, and said it as if my words could get through to Kitchener in eternity.

"With that a taxicab forced through the crowd, close to the platform, and it stopped and somebody got out. I could see an officer's cap and the crowd

pressing. My eyes were riveted on that brown cap; my breath came queerly; there was a murmur, a hush and a murmur together, where that tall officer with the cap over his face pushed toward the speakers. I felt I should choke if I didn't see him—and I couldn't see him. Then he made the platform, and before my eyes, before the eyes of twenty thousand people, he stood there—Kitchener!"

General Cochrane stared defiantly at me. "I'm not asking you to believe this," he said. "I'm merely telling you—what happened."

"Go on," I whispered.

He went on: "A silence like death fell on that vast crowd. The voice of the speaker screaming out wild cowardice about mercy from the Germans kept on for a few words, and then the man caught the electrical atmosphere and was aware that something was happening. He halted half-way in a word, and turned and faced the grim, motionless figure—Kitchener. The man stared a half minute and shot his hands up and howled, and ran into the throng. All over the great place, by then, was

a whisper swelling into a bass murmur, into a roar, his name.

"'Kitchener—Kitchener!' and 'K. of K.!' and 'Kitchener of Khartoum!'

"Never in my life have I heard a volume of sound like London shouting that day the name of Kitchener. After a time he lifted his hand and stood, deep-eyed and haggard, as the mass quieted. He spoke. I can't tell you what he said. I couldn't have told you the next hour. But he quieted us and lifted us, that crowd, fearstruck, sobbing, into courage. He put his own steady dignity into those cheap, frightened little Johnnies. He gave us strength even if the worst came, and he held up English pluck and doggedness for us to look at and to live by. As his voice stopped, as I stood down in front just under him, I flung up my arms, and I suppose I cried out something; I was but a lad of twenty, and half crazed with the joy of seeing him. And he swung forward a step to me as if he had seen me all the time—and I think he had. 'Do the turn, Donald,' he said. 'The time has come for a Cochrane to save England.'

"And with that he wheeled and without a look to right or left, in his own swift, silent, shy way he was gone.

"Nobody saw where he went. I all but killed myself for an hour trying to find him, but it was of no use. And with that, as I sat at my lunch, too feverish and stirred to eat food, demanding over and over what he meant, what the 'turn' was which I was to do, why a Cochrane should have a chance to save England—with that, suddenly I knew."

General Cochrane halted again, and again he gazed down the little river, the river of England, the river which he, more than any other, had kept for English folk and their peaceful play-times. I knew I must not hurry him; I waited.

"The thing came to me like lightning," he went on, "and I had only to go from one simple step to another; it seemed all thought out for me. It was something, don't you see, which I'd known all my lifetime, but hadn't once thought of since the war began. I went direct to my bankers and got a box out of the safe and fetched it home in a cab. There

I opened it and took out papers and went over them. . . . This part of the tale is mostly in print," General Cochrane interrupted himself. "Have you read it? I don't want to bore you with repetitions."

I answered hurriedly, trembling for fear I might say the wrong thing: "I've read what's in print, but your telling it puts it in another world. Please go on. Please don't shorten anything."

The shadow of a smile played. "I rather like telling you a story, d'you know," he spoke, half absent-mindedly—his real thoughts were with that huge past. He swept back to it. "You know, of course, about Dundonald's Destroyer—the invention of my great-grandfather's kinsman, Thomas Cochrane, tenth Earl of Dundonald? He was a good bit of an old chap in various ways. He did things to the French fleet that put him as a naval officer in the class with Nelson and Drake. But he's remembered in history by his invention. It was a secret, of course, one of the puzzles of the time and of years after, up to 1917. It was known there was something. He offered it to the govern-

ment in 1811, and the government appointed a committee to examine into it. The chairman was the Duke of York, commander-in-chief of the army, said to be the ablest administrator of military affairs of that time. Also there were Admirals Lord Keith and Exmouth and the Congreve brothers of the ordnance department. A more competent committee of five could not have been gathered in the world. This board would not recommend the adoption of the scheme. Why? They reported that there was no question that the invention would do all which Dundonald claimed, but it was so unspeakably dreadful as to be impossible for civilized men.

"There was not a shadow of doubt, the committee reported, that Dundonald's device would not merely defeat but annihilate and sweep out of existence any hostile force, whole armies and navies. 'No power on earth could stand against it,' said the old fellow, and the five experts backed him up. But they considered that the devastation would be inhuman beyond permissible warfare. Not war, annihilation. In fact, they shelved it because it

was too efficient. There was great need of means for fighting Napoleon just then, so they gave it up reluctantly, but it was a bit too shocking.

"The weak point of the business was, as Dundonald himself declared, that it was so simple—as everybody knows now—that its first use would tell the secret and put it in the hands of other nations. Therefore the committee recommended that this incipient destruction should be stowed away and kept secret, so that no power more unscrupulous than England should get it and use it for the annihilation of England and the conquest of the world. Also the committee persuaded the Earl before he went on his South American adventure to swear formally that he would never disclose his device except in the service of England. He kept that oath.

"Well, the formula for this affair was, of course, in pigeonholes or vaults in the British Admiralty ever since the committee in 1811 had examined and refused it. But there was also, unknown to the public, another copy. The Earl was with my great-grandfather, his kinsman and lifelong friend,

shortly before his death, and he gave this copy to him with certain conditions. The old chap had an ungovernable temper, quarreled right and left, don't you know, his life long, and at this time and until he died he was not on speaking terms with his son Thomas, who succeeded him as Earl, or indeed with any of the three other sons. Which accounts for his trusting to my great-grandfather the future of his invention. I found a quaint note with the papers. He said in effect that he had come to believe with the committee that it was quite too shocking for decent folk. Yet, he suggested, the time might come when England was in straits and only a sweeping blow could serve her. If that time should come it would be a joy to him in heaven or in hell—he said—to think that a man of his name had used the work of his brains to save England.

"Therefore, the Earl asked my grandfather to guard this gigantic secret and to see to it that one man in each generation of Cochranes should know it and have it at hand for use in an emergency. My grandfather came into the papers when he

came of age, and after him my father; I was due to read them when I should be twenty-one. I was only twenty in 1917. But the papers were mine, and from the moment it flashed to me what Kitchener meant I didn't hesitate. It was this enormous power which was placed suddenly in the hands of a lad of twenty. The Sirdar placed it there.

"I went over the business in an hour—it was simple, like most big things. You know what it was, of course; everybody knows now. Wasn't it extraordinary that in five thousand years of fighting no one ever hit on it before? I rushed to the War Office.

"Well, the thing came off. At first they poohpoohed me as an unbalanced boy, but they looked up the documents in the Admiralty and there was no question. It isn't often a youngster is called into the councils of the government, and I've wondered since how I held my own. I've come to believe that I was merely a body for Kitchener's spirit. I was conscious of no fatigue, no uncertainty. I did things as the Sirdar might have done them, and it appears to me only decent to realize

that he did do them, and not I. You probably know the details."

I waited, hoping that he would not stop. Then I said: "I know that the government asked for twenty-five volunteers for a service which would destroy the German fleet, but which would mean almost certain death to the volunteers. I know that you headed the list and that thousands offered." My voice shook and I spoke with difficulty as I realized to whom I was speaking. "I know that you were the only one who came back alive, and that you were barely saved."

General Cochrane seemed not to hear me. He was living over enormous events.

"It was a bright morning in the North Sea," he talked on, but not to me now. "Nobody but ourselves knew just what was to be done, but everybody hoped—they didn't know what. It was a desperate England from which we sailed away. We hadn't long to wait—the second morning. There were their ships, the triumphant long lines of the invader. There were their crowded transports, the soldiers coming to crucify England as they had

crucified Belgium—thousands and tens of thousands of them. Then—we did it. German power was wiped off the face of the earth. German arrogance was ended for all time. And that was the last I knew," said General Cochrane. "I was conscious till it was known that the trick had worked. Of course it couldn't be otherwise, yet it was so beyond anything which mankind had dreamed that I couldn't believe it till I knew. Then, naturally, I didn't much care if I lived or died. I'd done the turn as the Sirdar told me, and one life was a small thing to pay. I dropped into blackness quite happily, and when I woke up to this good earth I was glad. England was right. The Sirdar had saved her."

"And the Sirdar?" I asked him. "Was it—himself?"

"Himself? Most certainly."

"I mean—well—" I stammered. And then I plunged in. "I must know," I said. "Was it Lord Kitchener in flesh and blood? Had he been a prisoner in Germany and escaped? Or was it—his ghost?"

The old lion rubbed his cheek consideringly. "Ah, there you have me," and he smiled. "Didn't I tell you this was a tale which could be told to few people?" he demanded. "'Flesh and blood'—ah, that's what I can't tell you. But—himself? Those people, the immense crowd which saw him and recognized him, they knew. Afterwards they begged the question. The papers were full of a remarkable speech made by an unknown officer who strikingly resembled Kitchener. That's the way they got out of it. But those people knew, that day. There wasn't any doubt in their minds when that roar of his name went up. They knew! But people are ashamed to own to the supernatural. And yet it's all around us," mused General Cochrane.

"Could it have been—did you ever think—" I began, and dared not go on.

"Did I ever think what, child?" repeated the old officer, with his autocratic friendliness. "Out with it. You and I are having a truth-feast."

"Well, then," I said, "if you won't be angry—"

"I won't. Come along."

"Did you ever think that it might have been that —you were only a boy, and wounded and weak and overstrained—and full of longing for your godfather. Did you ever think that you might have mistaken the likeness of the officer for Kitchener himself? That the thought of Dundonald's Destroyer was working in your mind before, and that it materialized at that moment and you—imagined the words he said. Perhaps imagined them afterwards, as you searched for him over London. The two things might have suggested each other in your feverish boy's brain."

I stopped, frightened, fearful that he might think me not appreciative of the honor he had done me in telling this intimate experience. But General Cochrane was in no wise disturbed.

"Yes, I've thought that," he answered dispassionately. "It may be that was the case. And yet—I can't see it. That thing happened to me. I've not been able to explain it away to my own satisfaction. I've not been able to believe otherwise than that the Sirdar, England's hero, came to save England in her peril, and that he did it by

breathing his thought into me. His spirit got across somehow from over there—to me. I was the only available person alive. The copy in the archives was buried, dead and buried and forgotten for seventy years. So he did it—that way. And if your explanation is the right one it isn't so much less wonderful, is it?" he demanded. "In these days psychology dares say more than in 1917. One knows that ghost stories, as they called them in those ignorant times, are not all superstition and imagination. One knows that a soul lives beyond the present, that a soul sometimes struggles back from what we call the hereafter to this little earth—makes the difficult connection between an unseen world of spirit, unconditioned by matter, and our present world of spirit, conditioned by matter. When the pull is strong enough. And what pull could be stronger than England's danger? To Kitchener?" The black-lashed, gray eyes flamed at me, unblinking the rift of light through the curtain of eternal silences.

When I spoke again: "It's a story the world

ought to own some day," I said. "Love of country, faithfulness that death could not hinder."

"Well," said old General Cochrane, "when I'm gone you may write it for the world if you like, little American. And what I'll do will be to find the Sirdar, the very first instant I'm over the border, and say to him, 'I've known it was your work all along, sir, and however did you get it across?' "

A month ago my cousin sent me some marked newspapers. General Cochrane has gone over the border, and I make no doubt that before now he has found the Sirdar and that the two sons and saviors of a beloved little land on a little planet have talked over that moment, in the leisures and simplicities of eternity, and have wondered perhaps that anyone could wonder how he got it across.

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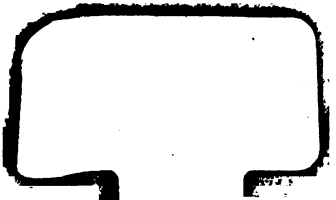
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